The CALENDAR
of Modern Letters

VOLUME I
NUMBER 3

MAY
1925

The First Letter from Heloïse to Abelard.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN BY C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF.

Heloïse, *formerly* Abelard's *mistress and then his wife, had, some time before this letter was written, been given by him the charge of the Monastery of Paraclete, which he had founded with the wealth of his disciples. The bodily outrage to which she refers is the castration of* Abelard *by his enemies, a fact related in his earlier letter to a friend.*

TO her master, nay her father, to her husband, nay brother, his handmaid, nay daughter, his spouse, nay sister: to ABELARD, HELOÏSE.

Your letter written to a friend for his comfort, beloved, was lately brought to me by chance. Seeing at once from the title that it was yours, I began the more ardently to read it in that the writer was so dear to me, that I might at least be refreshed by his words as by a picture of him whose presence I have lost. Almost every line of that letter, I remember, was filled with gall and wormwood, to wit those that related the miserable story of our conversion, and thy unceasing crosses, my all. Thou didst indeed fulfil in that letter what at the beginning of it thou hadst promised thy friend, namely

---

Mr. Guy Chapman will shortly publish the first complete translation of these letters.

that in comparison with thy troubles he should deem his own to be nothing or but a little matter. After setting forth thy former persecution by thy masters, then the outrage of supreme treachery upon thy body, thou hast turned thy pen to the execrable jealousy and inordinate assaults of thy fellow-pupils also, namely *Alberic* of Rheims and *Lotulph* the Lombard ; and what by their instigation was done to that famous work of thy theology, and what to thyself, as it were condemned to prison, thou hast not omitted.

From these thou comest to the machinations of thine Abbot and false brethren, and the grave detraction of thee by those two pseudo-apostles, stirred up against thee by the aforesaid rivals, and to the scandal raised by many of the name of Paraclete given to the oratory in departure from custom : and then, coming to those intolerable and still continuing persecutions of thy life, thou hast carried to the end the miserable story of that cruellest of extortioners and those wickedest of monks, whom thou callest thy sons. Which things I deem that no one can read or hear with dry eyes, for they renewed in fuller measure my griefs, so diligently did they express each several part, and increased them the more, in that thou relatedst that thy perils are still growing, so that we are all alike driven to despair of thy life, and every day our trembling hearts and throbbing bosoms await the latest rumour of thy death.

And so in His Name Who still protects thee in a certain measure for Himself, in the Name of Christ, as His handmaids and thine, we beseech thee to deign to inform us by frequent letters of those shipwrecks in which thou still art tossed, that thou mayest have us at least, who alone have remained to thee, as partners in thy grief or joy. For they are wont to bring some comfort to a grieving man who grieve with him, and any burden that is laid on several is borne more easily, or transferred. And if this tempest should have been stilled for a space, then all the more hasten thou to write, the more pleasant thy letter will be. But whatsoever it be of which thou mayest write to us, thou wilt confer no small remedy on us ; if only in this that thou wilt show thyself to be keeping us in mind.

For how pleasant are the letters of absent friends *Seneca*

himself by his own example teaches us, writing thus in a certain passage to his friend *Lucilius :* " Because thou writest to me often, I thank thee. For in the one way possible thou showest thyself to me. Never do I receive a letter from thee, but immediately we are together." If the portraits of our absent friends are pleasant to us, which renew our memory of them and relieve our regret for their absence by a false and empty consolation, how much more pleasant are letters which bring us the written characters of the absent friend. But thanks be to God, that in this way at least no jealousy prevents thee from restoring to us thy presence, no difficulty impedes thee, no neglect (I beseech thee) need delay thee.

Thou hast written to thy friend the comfort of a long letter, considering his difficulties, no doubt, but treating of thine own. Which diligently recording, whereas thou didst intend them for his comfort, thou hast added greatly to our desolation, and while thou wert anxious to heal his wounds hast inflicted fresh wounds of grief on us and made our former wounds to ache again. Heal, I beseech thee, the wounds that thou thyself hast given, who art so busily engaged in healing the wounds given by others. Thou hast indeed humoured thy friend and comrade, and paid the debt as well of friendship as of comradeship ; but by a greater debt thou hast bound thyself to us, whom it behoves thee to call not friends but dearest friends, not comrades but daughters, or by a sweeter and a holier name, if any can be conceived.

As to the greatness of the debt which binds thee to us neither argument nor evidence is lacking, that any doubt be removed ; and if all men be silent the fact itself cries aloud. For of this place thou, after God, art the sole founder, the sole architect of this oratory, the sole builder of this congregation. Nothing didst thou build here on the foundations of others. All that is here is thy creation. This wilderness, ranged only by wild beasts or by robbers, had known no habitation of men, had contained no dwelling. In the very lairs of the beasts, in the very lurking places of the robbers, where the name of God is not heard, thou didst erect a divine tabernacle, and didst dedicate the Holy Ghost's own temple. Nothing didst thou borrow from the wealth of kings or princes, when thou couldst have obtained so much and from so many,

that whatsoever was wrought here might be ascribed to thee alone. Clerks or scholars flocking in haste to thy teaching ministered to thee all things needful, and they who lived upon ecclesiastical benefices, who knew not how to make but only how to receive oblations, and had hands for receiving, not for giving, became lavish and importunate here in the offering of oblations.

Thine, therefore, truly thine is this new plantation in the divine plan, for the plants of which, still most tender, frequent irrigation is necessary that they may grow. Frail enough, from the weakness of the feminine nature, is this plantation ; it is infirm, even were it not new. Wherefore it demands more diligent cultivation and more frequent, after the words of the Apostle : " I have planted, *Apollos* watered ; but God gave the increase." The Apostle had planted, by the doctrines of his preaching, and had established in the Faith the Corinthians, to whom he wrote. Thereafter *Apollos*, the Apostle's own disciple, had watered them with sacred exhortations, and so by divine grace the increment of virtues was bestowed on them. Thou art tending the vineyard of another's vine which thou didst not plant, which is turned to thine own bitterness, with admonitions often wasted and holy sermons preached in vain. Think of what thou owest to thine own, who thus spendest thy care on another's. Thou teachest and reprovest rebels, nor gainest thou aught. In vain before swine dost thou scatter the pearls of divine eloquence. Who givest so much thought to the obstinate, consider what thou owest to the obedient. Who bestowest so much on thine enemies, meditate what thou owest to thy daughters. And, to say nothing of the rest, think by what a debt thou art bound to me, that what thou owest to the community of devoted women thou mayest pay more devotedly to her who is thine alone.

How many grave treatises in the teaching, or in the exhortation, or for the comfort of holy women the holy Fathers composed, and with what diligence they composed them, thine excellence knows better than our humility. Wherefore to no little amazement thine oblivion moves the tender beginnings of our conversion, that neither by reverence for God, nor by love of us, nor by the examples of the holy Fathers hast thou

been admonished to attempt to comfort me, as I waver and am already crushed by prolonged grief, either by speech in thy presence or by a letter in thine absence. And yet thou knowest thyself to be bound to me by a debt so much greater in that thou art tied to me more closely by the pact of the nuptial sacrament; and that thou art the more beholden to me in that I ever, as is known to all, embraced thee with an unbounded love. Thou knowest, dearest, all men know what I have lost in thee, and in how wretched a case that supreme and notorious betrayal took me myself also from me with thee, and that my grief is immeasurably greater from the manner in which I lost thee than from the loss of thee.

And the greater the cause of grief, the greater the remedies of comfort to be applied. Not, however, by another, but by thee thyself, that thou who art alone in the cause of my grief may be alone in the grace of my comfort. For it is thou alone that canst make me sad, canst make me joyful or canst comfort me. And it is thou alone that owest me this great debt, and for this reason above all that I have at once performed all things that thou didst order, till that when I could not offend thee in anything I had the strength to lose myself at thy behest. And what is more, and strange it is to relate, to such madness did my love turn that what alone it sought it cast from itself without hope of recovery when, straightway obeying thy command, I changed both my habit and my heart, that I might show thee to be the one possessor both of my body and of my mind. Nothing have I ever (God wot) required of thee save thyself, desiring thee purely, not what was thine. Not for the pledge of matrimony, nor for any dowry did I look, nor my own passions or wishes but thine (as thou thyself knowest) was I zealous to gratify.

And if the name of wife appears more sacred and more valid, sweeter to me is ever the word friend, or, if thou be not ashamed, concubine or whore. To wit that the more I humbled myself before thee the fuller grace I might obtain from thee, and so also damage less the fame of thine excellence. And thou thyself wert not wholly unmindful of that kindness in the letter of which I have spoken, written to thy friend for his comfort. Wherein thou hast not disdained to set forth sundry reasons by which I tried to dissuade thee from our marriage,

from an ill-starred bed ; but wert silent as to many, in which I preferred love to wedlock, freedom to a bond. I call God to witness, if *Augustus*, ruling over the whole world, were to deem me worthy of the honour of marriage, and to confirm the whole world to me, to be ruled by me for ever, dearer to me and of greater dignity would it seem to be called thy strumpet than his empress.

For it is not by being richer or more powerful that a man becomes better ; one is a matter of fortune, the other of virtue. Nor should she deem herself other than venal who weds a rich man rather than a poor, and desires more things in her husband than himself. Assuredly, whomsoever this concupiscence leads into marriage deserves payment rather than affection ; for it is evident that she goes after his wealth and not the man, and is willing to prostitute herself, if she can, to a richer. As the argument advanced (in *Aeschines*) by the wise *Aspasia* to *Xenophon* and his wife plainly convinces us. When the wise woman aforesaid had propounded this argument for their reconciliation, she concluded as follows : " For when ye have understood this, that there is not a better man nor a happier woman on the face of the earth ; then ye will ever and above all things seek that which ye think the best ; thou to be the husband of so excellent a wife, and she to be married to so excellent a husband." A blessed sentiment, assuredly, and more than philosophic, expressing wisdom itself rather than philosophy. A holy error and a blessed fallacy among the married, that a perfect love should preserve their bond of matrimony unbroken, not so much by the continence of their bodies as by the purity of their hearts. But what error shows to the rest of women the truth has made manifest to me. Since what they thought of their husbands, that I, that the entire world not so much believed as knew of thee. So that the more genuine my love was for thee, the further it was removed from error.

For who among kings or philosophers could equal thee in fame ? What kingdom or city or village did not burn to see thee ? Who, I ask, did not hasten to gaze upon thee when thou appearedst in public, nor on thy departure with straining neck and fixed eye follow thee ? What wife, what maiden did not yearn for thee in thine absence, nor burn in

thy presence ? What queen or powerful lady did not envy me my joys and my bed ? There were two things, I confess, in thee especially, wherewith thou couldst at once captivate the heart of any woman ; namely the arts of making songs and of singing them. Which we know that other philosophers have seldom followed. Wherewith as with a game, refreshing the labour of philosophic exercise, thou hast left many songs composed in amatory measure or rhythm, which for the suavity both of words and of tune being oft repeated, have kept your name without ceasing on the lips of all ; since even illiterates the sweetness of thy melodies did not allow to forget thee. It was on this account chiefly that women sighed for love of thee. And as the greater part of thy songs descanted of our love, they spread my fame in a short time through many lands, and inflamed the jealousy of many women against me. For what excellence of mind or body did not adorn thy youth ? What woman who envied me then does not my calamity now compel to pity one deprived of such delights ? What man or woman, albeit an enemy at first, is not now softened by the compassion due to me ?

And though exceeding guilty I am, as thou knowest, exceeding innocent. For it is not the deed but the intention that makes the crime. It is not what is done but the spirit in which it is done that equity considers. And in what state of mind I have ever been towards thee, only thou, who hast knowledge of it, canst judge. To thy consideration I commit all, I yield in all things to thy testimony. Tell me one thing only, if thou canst, why, after our conversion, which thou alone didst decree, I am fallen into such neglect and oblivion with thee that I am neither refreshed by thy speech and presence nor comforted by a letter in thine absence. Tell me, one thing only, if thou canst, or let me tell thee what I feel, nay what all suspect. Concupiscence joined thee to me rather than affection, the ardour of desire rather than love. When therefore what thou desiredst ceased, all that thou hadst exhibited at the same time failed. This, most beloved, is not mine only but the conjecture of all, not peculiar but common, not private but public. Would that it seemed thus to me only, and thy love found others to excuse it, by whom my grief might be a little quieted. Would that I could invent reasons

by which in excusing thee I might cover in some measure my own vileness.

Give thy attention, I beseech thee, to what I demand; and thou wilt see this to be a small matter and most easy for thee. While I am cheated of thy presence, at least by written words, whereof thou hast an abundance, present to me the sweetness of thine image. In vain may I expect thee to be liberal in things if I must endure thee niggardly in words. Until now I believed that I deserved more from thee when I had done all things for thee, persevering still in obedience to thee. Who indeed as a girl was allured to the asperity of monastic conversation not by religious devotion but by thy command alone. Wherein if I deserve nought from thee, thou mayest judge my labour to have been vain. No reward for this may I expect from God, for the love of Whom it is well known that I did not anything. When thou hastenedst to God, I followed thee in the habit, nay preceded thee. For as though mindful of the wife of *Lot*, who looked back from behind him, thou deliveredst me first to the sacred garments and monastic profession before thou gavest thyself to God. And for that in this one thing thou shouldst have had little trust in me I vehemently grieved and was ashamed. For I (God wot) would without hesitation precede or follow thee to the Vulcanian fires according to thy word. For not with me was my heart, but with thee. But now, more than ever, if it be not with thee, it is nowhere. For without thee it cannot anywhere exist. But so act that it may be well with thee, I beseech thee. And well with thee will it be if it find thee propitious, if thou give love for love, little for much, words for deeds. Would that thy love, beloved, had less trust in me, that it might be more anxious! But the more confident I have made thee in the past, the more neglectful now I find thee. Remember, I beseech thee, what I have done, and pay heed to what thou owest me. While with thee I enjoyed carnal pleasures, many were uncertain whether I did so from love or from desire. But now the end shows in what spirit I began. I have forbidden myself all pleasures that I might obey thy will. I have reserved nothing for myself, save this, to be now entirely thine. Consider therefore how great is thine injustice, if to me who deserve more thou payest less,

nay nothing at all, especially when it is a small thing that is demanded of thee, and right easy for thee to perform.

And so in His Name to whom thou hast offered thyself, before God I beseech thee that in whatsoever way thou canst thou restore to me thy presence, to wit by writing me some word of comfort. To this end alone that, thus refreshed, I may give myself with more alacrity to the service of God. When in time past thou soughtest me out for temporal pleasures thou visitedst me with endless letters, and by frequent songs didst set thy *Heloïse* on the lips of all men. With me every public place, each house resounded. How more rightly shouldst thou excite me now towards God, whom thou excitedst then to desire. Consider, I beseech thee what thou owest me, pay heed to what I demand ; and my long letter with a brief ending I conclude. Farewell, my all.

Poems

By EDGELL RICKWORD.

Introduction.

The only birds to call this city home
Roost on the branching nerves, at every stride
Dig talons deeper through the vein's thin crust
To rip the surface of my life's winding dream—
Such thoughts as these; I carry Time on my wrist,
A weak thong straps that daemon at my side,
He overshadows me, unseen to others
Who only see the hands on a common dial,
And not the hands I linked for my undoing,
Naming Duration, chains of change and decay.
His fingers are ten winds that fan the stars,
Extinguish some and set others glowing;
Mountains are more impermanent and the forests
Wither not much slower than a flower-bed,
Whose deep-grained iron trunks, brittle as stalks
Of dandelions to me, his fingers crumple.
Even the land has that old enemy ocean
Quiet as a cat rubbing the edge of things
And purring on the limits of destruction.
The tragedy of human habitations
Is subject for the eloquence of Gibbon,
I meditate private disasters only,
And among these, Time's treachery to women,
The faint cosmetic mask grain by grain stolen
Till their moon-faces wane and no light fills
With thin romantic foliage lips' dry valleys.

The root of misery is the fact of change
Always anticipated by the mind,
Which, met like Dürer's Death at a street-crossing,
Would shock imagination to create
New shapes of permanence and evolve machines

Not anthropomorphic but in power like Spring,
Whence young gods would step down to wound the earth,
Raising like crocus-flocks delicate beings—
As spirits flutter from the gash of pain.

Time the cartographer makes no more quaint maps,
Putting at boundaries where venture failed
A whorlèd Kraken belching blank surmise,
But over all, profaning mysteries,
Lays sleek meridians crossed with parallels ;
So the twin hemispheres, Anger and Love,
With forests feathered and wide ocean eyes
Decoyed at mating like wild sea-birds, glare
In gorgeous ruin from the cuckold's net.

Later causality builds on this foundation
An iron pain and concrete mass of thought,
Such a cuirass as Milton's Satan wanted
Against the coldly bright angelic darts
Insinuating hope, remorse, regret,
Thin dimming poisons in his sparkling veins.
Emotion sprouts slender geometries,
Angular vines and dark festooning cables
Bursting in crackling heads that shed for scent
A sick mauve luminosity in our lanes,
All deathless vegetation frets far-off ;
The arborescent chaos of the blood
Lapping like water the sea-walls of sense ;
The womb of words and grave where naked men,
Not coffined, nailed or shrouded in conceits,
But embryonic corpses of desire,
Rock in the moon-drawn cradle of a sea,
Warm dark salt secret turgid dung-tanged waste.

Annihilation.

My cat and dog dream not as I. This room
Is their smooth field, hazardous but not strange ;
Tall flowers stand there biting at the touch,
And half my wisdom hangs upon that bloom.

For when those candles fade we are shut up ;
Sight gone, no sense responds to summons much ;
But darkness is a world the beast may range
And miss no stone the orphic sun built up.

Light gone, my books are dumb for me or cat,
Taste wanes, smell fails, the fingers hardly wake ;
My dog cocks ears at a familiar foot
And greets my love before my brain thinks that.

Dark holds Earth rigid in whose bowl of hills
Silence flows down, a soft reflecting lake
Filled with this velvet, gold-pierced scene whose root
My Thought leans over, sighing as it kills.

Absences.

(i)

In the Solitude of Soul
Not another did I see,
Till my longing in despair
Grew incorporate with Air.

Then, O Shadow, no control
Bounded our twin unity,
And the land grew soft as moss
That gentle thoughts bare-foot might cross.

Guileless figures came and went,
Creating it a place of calm.
Self nor Shadow did not move
In the atmosphere of Love.

One above the other bent
Like willows in a pool of balm.
Air so luminous that Shade
One with her own self was made.

Now is Joy's own image spilled
And the Landscape in Eclipse
Has the crumpled emptiness
Of a fine discarded dress.

Broken mirror Pride had willed!
Her form like water from me slips.
No lake, no glass will now return
The shade with which, lonely, I burn.

(ii)

Now that you lie in lonely pain,
O Moon in no flower-clouded bed,
What shall evoke our Joy again,
O Tears, rain Tears on Pleasure dead.

Under their sharp caressing stroke
The foliage of our love revives,
Though your face pale when anguish broke
Alone on Night's dead sea survives.

Memory.

Dumb forest belts the Mountains of the Moon,
Unverdant, sapless, twilit, bird-deserted;
The shadow of the heart unvisited,
The grey antithesis of golden noon.
Root-stricken Fancy in an endless swoon
Dies but decays not, to new use perverted;
Staunch phallic trunks to pretty emblems twisted,
Question the passing of their sun so soon.

Birds might expect the crystal note of dawn
And in shrill cries anticipate the light;
This vegetation has no way to praise.
The faintest whistle through its stillness drawn,
This weightless fabric sinks to dust and night,
Having once bloomed, for such are natural ways.

Assuagement.

What messages are these the morning brings
My angry city from kind-bosomed fields ?
The cool, soft words of vegetable things
Placating her whose rumour never yields
To the far-blown persuasion of quiet grass ;
Whose wrinkled fever dewfall never cools ;
Now for a moment stilled, as waggons pass,
To faint remembrance of her ancient pools.

The streets of pain and theatres of despair,
The heart's metropolis, this peace dispute,
Matching solidity against permanence ;
Only the moon wears a consistent air,
Watching the clouds answer the wind's thin flute
In azure meadows' poor inheritance.

Covent Garden. Early Morning.

Invocation to Angels.

Angels ! bequeath your tongues of flame
To those who need them more than you,
In Paradise you know no shame
And love blooms not without that dew.

In these pale-leaved suburban groves
We melancholy couples lie,
Whom some uncouth persuasion moves
In one another's arms to die.

Our better nature then proceeds
To sublimation of its dross,
And to ideals from lower needs
Flings a phantasmal bridge across.

Shall we tread proudly, O my love,
This Jacob's Ladder of escape ?
I know you gentler than the dove
Whose timid eyes invite the rape ;

Yet not, I think, so small of mind
As to preen plumage of the Bird
Whose dazzling beauty strikes us blind
Though but abstracted from a word.

The swans in flight through winter dusk
Seem to man fast in Nature's vice,
Emblems of power as pure as musk
And first to pride his thoughts entice.

Yet in our shameful partnerships
Such rarely lovely moments rise,
It must be Impotence equips
A licensed brothel in the skies.

Let eyes reflect like forest lakes
All beasts to ancient comfort led,
Till joy to innocence awakes,
As children hug, in Earth's cold bed.

Chronique Scandaleuse.

Between low walls whose faded paper mocks
With painted blossoms bridals of the air
When lovers lay at will among their flocks,
A common scene stripped love's fresh branches bare.

Out of the ruin an old candour cried
Like a man speaking to a faithless friend,
" Now Hangman Pleasure's triple knot is tied
And we must share one halter till the end.

" So priest and victim in the antique glade
Felt the peculiar bond compress their heart,
Gazing in awed communion on the blade
That binds the creatures it would seem to part.

" My love is like an anchorite who frets
In ecstasy upon his couch of stone,
So little in me moves the hate that whets
The steel of vengeance on a wrong once done.

" The modern crowd that laps up tears for blood
Takes in such errors with its Sunday milk,
But there's a dualism in my mood
And envy tears my anguish like fine silk.

" My soul's a trampled dwelling-ground where Sade,
The gallant marquis, fences for his life
Against the invulnerable retrograde
Masoch, his shade, more constant than a wife."

Farewell to Fancy: or Suburb of Adolescence Re-visited.

The evening villas smoke and doze
Like men from daytime tasks released.
Round each small yard the air is creased
Where a thin boundary paling goes.

Like sick men's thoughts, the narrow strips
Of garden push forth small strange flowers
Sown in long-since vague hours
On curious or on shy girls' lips.

The nubile daughters now escape
To any waste or open plot
Where flowers or sweethearts may be got
For decoration or feigned rape.

On building-sites by tall stiff poles
Sweetly their maiden langour droops.
O dandelions and rusty hoops
And low foundations in their souls!

This is the rock on which we build,
Poets or Pierrots, our True Church;
The Deacon blessing our long search
A boy with amorous mischief filled.

Let us abjure the stately creeds
With mystic glades of conifers,
And all that Eloquence confers
Upon our elemental needs.

We will go with them by the tram
Beyond the city's lamps, and sit
With such emotions as befit
Those borne between the *Plough* and *Ram*.

And afterwards the gramophone
In dusky parlours shall delude
Our mutual insolicitude
With sentiments that mask our own.

We have been snobs or something worse,
Maintaining an elaborate pose,
Like girls with too-pretentious hose,
In a suburban Universe.

Plough and Ram: Emblems of Toil and Procreation.

The Dithyrambic Spectator.

An Essay on the Origins and Survivals of Art.

By WYNDHAM LEWIS.

PART II.

A very different book from this exhilarating and adventurous treatise by Dr. Elliot Smith* is the other one that I will arbitrarily associate here with it; in the hope of arriving, from a consideration of the two together, at something requiring some such historic backgrounds as they provide. This second book is Miss Harrison's *Ancient Art and Ritual* (Home University Library).

If Dr. Elliot Smith is attracted, through his professional experience, to the physiological antecedents of art, Miss Harrison is temperamentally attracted by the May-pole festivities of the village green of Merry England, and still merrier Greece. Whereas the truth of which Dr. Elliot Smith makes us so handsome a present has the authentic stamp of the hospital on it, and the appeal of that type of reality; Miss Harrison is principally indebted to Dr. Frazer for her very interesting evidence, and the anthropological *pugging*, if not the plan, of her theory. She naturally in *Ancient Art and Ritual* is concerned directly with the philosophy of art; and she presents her material in an attractive and lucid form.

Her theory of the origin of art reduces itself to this: (1) that the transition of art out of some earlier activity can be studied better in Greek art than elsewhere. (2) Of the two most important forms of art in Greece, the *drama* and *sculpture*: that (3) the *drama* came out of the ritual and magical practices of the people, or the particular practices associated with the cult of Dionysos; and that (4) the *statue* is—well, what all statues of gods are, a representation of a deity, which in its turn is the ideal presentment in mud, wood, or stone of a May-King, or Jack-in-the-Green—Dionysos or Apollo.

* "The Evolution of the Dragon." For the first part of Mr. Lewis's essay see Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 89-107.

"The stages, it would seem," she says, "are : actual life with its motor reactions, the ritual copy of life with its faded reactions ; the image of the god projected by the rite ; and, last, the copy of that image, the work of art. We see now why in the history of all ages and every place art is what is called the 'handmaid of religion.' She is not really the 'handmaid' at all. She springs straight out of the rite, and her first outward leap is the image of the god. Primitive art in Greece, in Egypt, in Assyria, represents either rites, processions, sacrifices, magical ceremonies, embodied prayers, or else it represents the images of the gods who spring from those rites."

Art invariably originated, for Miss Harrison, in a magical rite. Art is ritualistic material converted into secular display or representation : and in many cases arises on the decay of magic. The distinction between religion and magic is therefore a question presenting itself at the outset in her theory. She does not deal with it herself except very briefly, probably for want of space. It is a very involved question indeed on which few people are found to agree. It is really a distinction between a practical activity (that is magic) and a theoretic or abstract activity (religion) : and in that way there would seem to be some analogy between magic and religion on the one side, and ritual and art on the other, as the latter is understood by Miss Harrison.

The belief in magic is the sign of man's persuasion of his identity with nature. As he gradually separates himself from nature and becomes a human personality (as he thinks), and as he sees (as he then believes) that nature is inhuman and indifferent to him, he no longer believes that he can influence events outside himself in the objective mechanism over against which he stands. The fatalism that faces *la pluie et le beau temps* with an equal face since not a drop can be drawn from the sky, or prevented from falling, by any intercession or human coercion, such as formerly had been thought, is the sign of the civilised man who "takes things as they come."

Between this absolute mechanistic fatalism, the latest phase, and the phase of magic and ritual, the earliest, comes *religion*. The sacrificial bull, or bull-god, becomes a man. The "man-like daemon who rose from a real King of the May,

must himself be approached and dealt with as a man, bargained with, sacrificed to." In place of the ritual of sympathetic magic, we get the worship of a god. It is no longer attempted to coerce the seasons, or bring back, with little painted suns, the sun, or prevent him from interfering with the rain-clouds, and the crops; but the seasons are *personified:* "Abstract Fruitfulness" becomes a person—Ceres or Dionysos.

When the Roman State took into its care the superstitions of the people, organised the *jus divinum*, and relieved the private citizen of any obligation for personal anxiety and personal initiative and ingenuity where the various supernatural agencies were concerned, it killed the "religio," thus standardised, in the people. Such a taking over by the State of all the field of magic and superstition (such as the Calendar of Numa witnesses) did not occur apparently in Greece, and irresponsible rites flourished. The Roman gods were rigidly state-gods; all the observances, lustrations and so forth appropriate for the various phases of the agricultural year or of military service (the Roman year, beginning in the war-month with the activities of the Salii, and a great lustration) were standardised and attended to by the State. Whereas the Greek worship was more individualistic. It was no doubt this certain backwardness (if you look at it from the State standpoint) and individualism that made *art* flourish in Greece, whereas in Rome it hardly existed.

Religion, as we generally understand it, and in the sense in which Miss Harrison uses it, may be regarded as the arrival of something quite new on the scene, caused by the separation of the Subject from the Not-self. It is this first sundering of the subject from its surroundings that produces it. It is something arising to fill in the gap caused by the separation. Just as the order of animal gestation is that two beings by mingling produce a third, so a "god" is produced by their *separation*. But this god is not an amalgam of man and his environment, but rather a new environment created to correspond to needs transcending the scene of his earlier magical operations. It is all that is (1) terrestrially the Not-self; and (2) yet that to which no visible Not-self properly corresponds. It is to celebrate his divorce from nature that man creates a god.

In primitive magic there is at most a *numen* or functional spirit. Dr. Warde Fowler quotes a schema of the evolution of the *numen*, by von Domaszewski, as follows :

" (1) Momentary function of the *numina*, *e.g.* lightning ; (2) elevation of this into a permanent power or function ; (3) consequent limitation of the numen to a special well-marked function ; (4) elevation of the numen to a *deus*, conceived in the likeness of man, and male or female, because man cannot think of power otherwise than on the analogy of male and female creative energy. Lastly, when the *deus* is complete, the functions of the former numen become attributes or qualities, etc."

The *numina* are strictly " metaphoric powers " of animals or things. A *numen* is " a doing," an " activity," a manifestation of will in anything or anybody. It is certainly, in the end, the clearer and clearer conception of the Subject that anthropomorphises this function. At first there is nothing more in it than *itself*. It is just an ability to *do* something, or *be* something, a mechanism, as much an ascertainable and evident part of the world as experienced by men as are the leaves of the tree, a plough, or a piece of firewood. *Forculus* is the spirit of the door, but is nothing more than a door—the significance and use of a door. Similarly *Gardia* is the hinges of the door : it is a spirit that is *hinges* and all that we associate with hinges, and all that they can do, and nothing else. *Janus* was, it seems, a door-spirit. With all these varieties of " power " man regards himself, to begin with, as mixed up. There is an interpenetration of everything, enabling him to influence things as he is influenced by them. The door will fly to and nip his enemy for him : the hinges creak to warn him of an intruder, and so forth : that is if he treats them as he should. They are not anthropomorphic because he is hardly yet *man*. When he realises that these " powers " or functions are independent of him, and independent of his will, they are more menacing than before. For they now are *strange* and of a different substance to him. He redoubles his attentions, but with more respect. At that point comes the period of *pacts*, of religion, and of the legal structure whereby he secures himself.

We can now return to Miss Harrison's theory. In the magical and ritualistic stage men thought that *their* fertility

was the same as the fertility of their crops. When they sprinkled water on the ground, they thought that all water being *one*, as it were, this would break the drought. Their sprinkling was a kind of surgical operation on nature, that would bring on a miscarriage of the moisture of the sky, and precipitate the rain they desired. "Among the Omaha Indians of North America, when the corn is withering for want of rain, the members of the sacred Buffalo Society fill a large vessel with water and dance four times round it. One of them drinks some of the water and spirts it into the air, making a fine spray in imitation of mist or drizzling rain. Then he upsets the vessel, spilling the water on the ground; whereupon the dancers fall down and drink up the water, getting mud all over their faces. This saves the corn."

In Eastern Russia on Shrove Tuesday a girl gets into a hoop, to which leaves, flax, and a bell are attached. She jumps about vigorously crying "Flax, grow." She *is* the flax. Man is still, in such cases as that of the Russian peasant or the Omaha Indian, a part of nature. He can get inside nature, identify himself with it, and so influence it not from *without*, as a distant or disconnected suppliant, but as part of it, as the little toe can make itself felt from head to foot, and get its way probably.

With an agricultural people the bull is regarded as an especially fertile object: and the dionysian ritual in Greece centred round this animal. The long series of sacrificial spring-time bulls driven in procession eventually became Dionysos; just as Janus, who began as a door, would finish as a stately and bearded man.

It will be necessary for my subsequent argument to give a summary outline of Miss Harrison's account of the origin of Greek drama. It is such a familiar theme that the roughest indication will suffice.

"Tragedy—as also Comedy," Aristotle says, "was at first mere improvisation—the one (tragedy) originated with the leaders of the Dithyramb." This statement of Aristotle's connecting the art of the drama with the dithryamb gives the art and ritual theory, Miss Harrison believes, a firm "historical ground." The dithyramb was an excited dance occurring at the spring festival of Dionysos. This festival

resembled all the April and May-time festivals in any land, ushering in the summer, and all containing some fertility ritual or other, designed to promote the food supply.

In the original dionysian festival a flower-decked bull was driven about in procession by the Graces. It was of this bull that Dionysos was "born," as Plutarch conjectures. There is a record of what happened to this spring-time bull at Magnesia (a Greek city in Asia Minor). Till the following April he was handsomely kept, and then sacrificed. "Why must a thing so holy die? Why not live out the term of his life? He dies because he *is* so holy, that he may give his holiness, his strength, his life, just at the moment it is holiest, to his people." So the bull is eaten, each man gets a piece, that he may take into his composition "the strength of the Bull, . . . the luck of the State." But the bull would come to life again, or be resurrected, in another bull, and so on endlessly.

"Year by year in the various villages of Greece was seen an actual holy Bull, and bit by bit from the remembrance of these various holy Bulls, who only died to live again each year, there arose the image of a Bull-Spirit, or Bull-Daimon, and finally, if we like to call him so, a Bull-God."

The long succession of the chorus-leaders of the dithyramb, the Kings of the May, became in retrospect, in the same way, Miss Harrison tells us, *one* King, or Spirit of the Spring. So arises the conception of a God, in this case Dionysos.

So far this is evidently the history of a certain fertility ritual, and is not necessarily *art*, any more than the evolution of words is poetry; except in so far as all language is a sort of poetry, and all movement a sort of dance.

The transition between the bull and the man-god, and the transition between the dithyramb and the full-fledged drama of Sophocles, is necessarily obscure: and as there is no exact contemporary record (Aristotle being our best, and one of our only, authorities, we learn from Miss Harrison and others engaged in the same investigations) a great deal is left to the imagination, and there is considerable room for alternative theories.

Art "springs straight out of the rite, and the first outward leap is the image of the god." The "leap" of art mentioned by Miss Harrison is like the lightning flash; we know that such

a flash occurs, and at that we must leave it. At one moment it is one thing, and then suddenly it is something else.

The transition from the crude dithyramb—the dance and song occurring at the spring festival of Dionysos, a circular space being set aside for the final performance, in the centre of which was placed the altar of the god—to the drama is another "leap," for the following of which we possess only a slender illumination " : . . Tragedy—as also Comedy—was at first mere improvisation," Aristotle tells us. Further he informs us that "Æschylus first introduced a second actor; he diminished the importance of the Chorus and assigned the leading part to the dialogue. Sophocles raised the number of actors to three, and added scene-painting. Moreover, it was not till late that the short plot was discarded for one of greater compass, and the grotesque diction of the earlier satyric form for the stately manner of Tragedy. The iambic measure then replaced the trochaic tetrameter, which was originally employed when the poetry was of the satyric order, and had greater affinities with dancing. Once dialogue had come in, Nature herself discovered the appropriate measure. For the iambics, of all measures, are the most colloquial . . . "

The researches of Miss Harrison, Messrs. Gilbert Murray, Cornford, or Cook are *pugging* for the above clear but spare account found in the Poetics. We see in the passage above, even, Aristotle's assumption of a common origin for Tragedy and Comedy. Add to that Miss Harrison's one solid bit of "ground" for her theory—namely Aristotle's remark that Tragedy originated with the leaders of the dithyramb, and you arrive at Mr. Cornford's statement (*The Origin of Attic Comedy*) that "the ritual drama lying behind Comedy proves to be essentially of the same type as that in which Professor Gilbert Murray has sought the origin of Tragedy."

From the point of view of these investigators Aristotle's account is inadequate (possibly owing to the loss of the second book of the Poetics, where he might have been more historically explicit) because he is not interested in the extant book of the Poetics with the origins of art, but with its philosophy once it is there. *Imitation* is for him the key to it. But Poetry has its origin, he tells us, in amateur improvisations. Miss Harrison's book traces the development of art from this inchoate

existence as amateur contribution to a common magical ritual, into the highly trained professional setting of Attic drama.

As to Comedy, Mr. Cornford writes, "we have no ground for supposing that the folk-play which lay behind Comedy took shape in the *city* of Athens at all. The best tradition that we have connects both Susarion, the reputed founder of Comedy, and Thespis, the founder of Tragedy, not with Athens, but with Ikaria, an outlying centre of Dionysaic worship . . . such processions and mummer's plays are more likely to survive in country villages than in cities." Augustine tells us that the Italian Liberalia were celebrated "in the fields" and *later* brought into Rome itself. So "why should we not accept the tradition that Comedy was imported from Ikaria to Athens?"

Aristotle's account of the rival claims of the Dorians and the Megarians seems to have something to do with this question. "Tragedy too is claimed by certain Dorians of the Peleponese. In each case they appeal to the evidence of language. The outlying villages they say are by them called κῶμαι, by the Athenians δῆμοι; and they assume that Comedians were so named not from κωμάζειν, 'to rival,' but because they wandered from village to village (κατὰ κωμας), being excluded contemptuously from that city" (*Butler's translation, Poetics*, chap. iii).

Mr. Cornford concludes that the great Dionysia (in which the Attic dance arose) was an artificial thing, imported into Athens from the country districts. "The great Dionysia, again, has not the air of a primitive feast at all. It was probably the artificial creation of Peisistratus' desire to have a great musical festival at a season of the year when it was possible for foreigners to be present and enjoy the glories of Athens;"—Miss Harrison is more disposed to give a rustic, "merry-England" picture of Athens not so metropolitan as Mr. Cornford's. But, when she has to "leap," with art, from the dithyramb to the drama, she naturally allows that it was no doubt Peisistratus who was responsible; that, in short, Attic drama did not grow, but had to be brought to birth by a "tyrannic" midwife, as a feature of his policy.

The artificial imposition of the Homeric cycle on Athens, the substitution of the hero-cult of the Achaians and the

achaian pantheon for the local peasant ritual and agriculturist superstition, was an imposition from without and above. The personal intervention of Peisistratus seems (under correction) to weaken Miss Harrison's theory.

"Athens might, it would seem, but for the coming of Homer, have lain stagnant in a backwater of conservatism, content to go on chanting her traditional Spring Songs year by year. It is wonderful that this city of Athens . . . should have been saved from the storm and stress . . . spared the actual horrors of a heroic age, yet given heroic poetry, given the clear wine-cup poured when the ferment was over."

So Athens is, even in its destiny, made *the perfect artist.* This city, "beloved of the gods," in Miss Harrison's words, is not brought into violent contact with reality, but this heroic reality of the Achaian sagas—when all the fuss and disturbing violence is over—is brought to her in an after-glow of romance; and the Attic stage blooms, at a safe distance from the devastating demi-gods of which it treats. "The Homeric saga had for an Athenian poet just the remoteness from immediate action which, as we have seen, is the essence of art as contrasted with ritual." But the existence of this saga, its convenient remoteness, the accident of a tyrant with an eye on it for his own purposes, are all obstacles to the smooth running of the theory.

"The main contention of the present book is that ritual and art have, in emotion towards life, a common root, and further, that primitive art develops normally; all over the world it is found that primitive ritual consists, not in prayer and praise and sacrifice, but in mimetic dancing. But it is in Greece, and perhaps in Greece only, in the religion of Dionysos, that we can actually trace, if dimly, the transition steps that led from dance to drama, from ritual to art."

That *art* and *ritual* "have, in emotion towards life, a common root" is what Miss Harrison not only does not, I think, prove: but also it is what, elsewhere, her statements certainly contradict. From the interest of their hunt for sources to enable them to derive the drama from a primitive magical rite, a collective religious activity, it is perhaps only a step that these specialists should wish to drag *art* in, as well, to help them in their attachments, and to round their structure.

Or there may be some other, and emotional reason, at work. But whatever the reason, in Miss Harrison's case, it involves her in a kind of fundamental contradiction which I think it will be useful to point out.

That Mr. Cornford is more conscious than is Miss Harrison of this possible pitfall is proved by various passages in his book (*Origin of Attic Comedy*).

"Anyone who states a theory," he writes in his ninth chapter, "of the historic origin of any form of art is sure to be attacked for neglecting the creative power of individual men of genius, and—something that lies deeper still—the common impulse obscurely felt by the men of a certain society, at a certain time, the common need that their apprehension of life, its laughter and its tears, shall find some expression in art. Such a criticism may be just. This book would deserve it, if I were for a moment to delude myself or the reader with the suggestion that there is nothing in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus or the *Birds* of Aristophanes, of which the germ is not already present in Punch and Judy. If it is necessary to disclaim anything so absurd, it shall here be set down that our argument does not suppose the original drama, or the degenerate folk-play which may have followed it, to have contained, even in germ, either the wit of Aristophanes or the wisdom of Æschylus, either the comic or the tragic perception of life. It admits, moreover, that all these factors were needed, as independent and original forces, to shape fifth-century drama. But that is a good reason for excluding them, so far as possible, from a scientific discussion of historic origins."

And Mr. Cornford admits also "that there was every reason that Aristotle should exclude a scientific discussion of historic origins" from a treatise on the nature of art. Miss Harrison, however, *confuses* them with considerable gusto.

I should not presume to offer any opinion on these very technical matters if it were not that, in the first place, this question of origins is involved with Miss Harrison's theory of art to such an extent that it is impossible to discuss one without discussing the other: and secondly, it seems clear that the available argument of this group of investigators really hinges on Aristotle's Poetics, and so their *agon* is thus being

carried on much nearer to the non-specialist borderland than is often the case.

In Mr. Cornford's book this transpires more clearly than in Miss Harrison's.

"Aristotle quite clearly states that Tragedy had emerged from a phase which he calls 'satyric.' . . . Without going further into the historic problems I will here express the opinion that, if Tragedy had declined to this level, its dignity and stateliness can only have been conferred upon it by the deliberate and conscious effort of individual poets, probably under the direction of Peisistratus. The process may have involved the expurgation of that side of the drama which was most obviously connected with fertility" (p. 214).

" . . . we cannot, I believe, dispense with the supposition of a conscious rescue of Tragedy from its satyric phase—a deliberate expulsion of those elements which distinguish the satyric drama from the tragic plays to which it was so closely linked. The conclusion that concerns our present argument is that there is good reason to believe that, if we could see a tragedy of the time before Æschylus and Peisistratus, we might find that it was a performance not much more serious and dignified than the Old Comedy. . . . In the case of Comedy we have not to suppose any such violent break with the popular tradition of the folk-play as I conjecture to have been deliberately effected for Tragedy" (p. 215).

He ends the book still attached to this doubt. "There is, so far as I can see, nothing in Aristotle's positive statements that is inconsistent with the hypothesis of this book, which I now commend to the reader's judgment."

It is not so much that anything in Aristotle's statements contradicts these theories, as that Aristotle would probably have regarded the historic explanation offered here as beside the point. Further, when employed by Miss Harrison, it becomes more dangerous, as the emotional acceleration occurring as we pass from the admirably argued pages of Mr. Cornford to those of Miss Harrison involves us, we find, in many things with which Aristotle certainly would not have agreed.

It will be easily seen how the statements of Miss Harrison's colleague, Mr. Cornford, weaken her theory. The "deliberate and conscious efforts of individual poets" under the arbitrary

directions of Peisistratus; the arbitrary imposition of the Achaian cycle on the old so different "iambic element"; the "violent break" whereby this transition from a rude mummery into drama was effected, does not seem, on the face of it, to provide Miss Harrison with a universal law of growth of art out of ritual.

"It is a fact of cardinal importance," Miss Harrison writes, "that their (the Greeks') word for theatrical representation, *drama*, is own cousin to their word for rite, *dromenon*: drama also means 'thing done.'"

She takes these two words, *dromenon* and *drama*, to stand for the two things, "ritual" and "art." "The savage is a man of action," she tells us. "Instead of asking a god to do what he wants done, he does it or tries to do it himself." The savage is a *doer* (as Carlyle's king was "a man able to do.") There are no flies on the savage—he does not allow the grass to grow under his feet. We can surrender ourselves to a study of his practices with the full confidence that we shall be in the presence of "one of ourselves"—a man, in short, that we can respect. Again, "the two great interests of primitive man are food and children"; more and more like us. We feel that we soon shall be quite at home with the savage.

It is this savage—a Greek savage—who decides to stake his luck on the Spring-time Bull: to regard it as holy, form a procession and so forth, as we have seen. And so (as we have also seen) in due course art makes its "leap," and a god turns up, named Dionysos. This savage spring-time rout invents crude and obscene mummeries to give a little variety to its festive processions. The townsmen are disposed to turn up their noses at these goings-on: but all of a sudden Peisistratus, the crafty tyrant, has an idea, and invites the savages into the town, gives them a circular spot, carefully flattened, to dance and howl on, and he also proposes an entire rehandling of their mummeries; great town-poets appear, the Homeric cycle is brought forward, and the Attic stage is born. Such, duly foreshortened, is the tale Miss Harrison has to tell—into which I have incorporated Mr. Cornford's emendations. (As far as possible, I will imitate the tone of Miss Harrison's exposition, and respond as the reader envisaged is supposed to respond.)

The history of this circular spot on which the dancing first occurs is a drama in itself. " We have seen that the orchestra (that is the circular spot set apart, with its dancing chorus) stands for ritual, for the stage on which all were worshippers, all joined in a rite of practical intent. We saw further that the *theatre*, the place for the spectators, stood for art. In the orchestra all is life and dancing ; the marble *seats* are the very symbol of rest, aloofness from action, contemplation. The seats for the spectators grow and grow in importance till at last they absorb, as it were, the whole spirit, and give their name *theatre* to the whole structure ; *action is swallowed up in contemplation*."

So there we have the *artist* (the contemplative spectator, seated on the cold marble) contrasted with the *ritualist* (the savage and practical-minded, actor or " doer " of his *dromenon*). The savage ritualistic dancing mass is gradually overcome by the growing mass of silent spectators, seated on the cold marble of contemplation, on the one hand (in the spectator-place), and the even more formidable innovation of a stage on the other. For the spectators knew that the dancing ritualistic savages were " men-of-action." They knew that " the ritual-dance was a *dromenon*, a thing to be done, not a thing to be looked at." But they were getting cold on the marble seats of contemplation, and wanted something *to look at*. (For in a sense a spectator is a man-of-action too ; only his way of *acting* is to *look*—that is why he is called a spectator, of course.)

" The history of the Greek stage is one long story of the encroachment of the stage on the orchestra. At first a rude platform or table is set up, then scenery is added ; the movable tent is translated into a stone house or temple front. This stands at first outside the orchestra ; then bit by bit the *scene* encroaches till the sacred circle of the dancing place is cut clean across. As the drama and the stage wax, the *dromenon* and the orchestra wane."

So these savage, practical-minded representatives of life —of food and children—are overcome by the spectator and the actor. Why should not the actor also be called an artist, as well as the spectator ? And then there is a third party that must also be let into this new pact against *life*—that is of

course the playwright. Since the actor is only *playing* at life he is *looking on* in a sense : also the playwright is probably a contemplative type of man.

That these new and, all said and done, rather strange elements have formed a veritable *pact against life* Miss Harrison makes clear. For she tells us to start with that " primitive man . . . has, it would seem, little sensitiveness to the æsthetic impulse of the beauty of a spring morning, to the pathos of autumn." Or : " It is not that the Australian wonders at and admires the miracle of the spring, the bursting of the flowers and the singing of birds ; it is not that his heart goes out in gratitude to an All-Father who is the giver of all good things ; it is that, obedient to the push of life within him, his impulse is towards *food*. He must *eat*, etc." Or : " It cannot be too often remembered that primitive man has but little, if any, interest in sun and moon and heavenly bodies for their inherent beauty or wonder : he cares for them . . . he performs rites in relation to them when he notes that they bring the seasons, and he cares for the seasons mainly because they bring him *food*."

We are already beginning to feel that the repetition of *food* in connection with the " man-of-action " (to whom we likened ourselves in the earlier stages of the story) is a little unnecessary and overdone. We mentally bridle (what's wrong with *food* ? anyway) and feel we have been deceived.

" Primitive man," again we hear, is " weak . . . in individuality, it is not his private and personal emotions that tend to become ritual, but those that are public, felt and expressed officially, that is by the whole tribe or community."

In the old ritual dance *the individual was nothing*, the choral band, the group, everything, and in this it did but reflect primitive tribal life. Now in the heroic saga *the individual* is everything, the mass of the people, the tribe or the group, is but a shadowy background which throws up the brilliant, clear-cut personality into a more vivid light.

This " shadowy background " we hear more about. We hear that our art to-day, under the impulsion of science, is an art of the background : and that the individual no longer exists.

Still (and pardonably) a little vague as to where we shall issue forth—whether we shall be expected to end practical-

minded savages, or spectators glued contemplatively to a cold marble seat—we proceed with Miss Harrison to a consideration of that puzzling individual—the *artist*. (The ritualist we know : he is a "man-of-action," a simple practical chap, and not unlike ourselves.)

"The artist renounces *doing*, in order to practise *seeing*." (So far so good : we never thought he *did* much.) "To understand and still more to contemplate life you must come out from the choral dance of life and stand apart." (That's not so good : for she seems to be suggesting that *we* don't "understand life.")

"Art is a cutting off of motor reactions." "Art, both creation and its enjoyment, is *unpractical*." "Thanks be to God, life is not limited to the practical!" (I liked her way of *putting* that last thing—but mercy, how my head turns!) "Artists . . . . are always late for dinner, they forget to post their letters or return books or even money that is lent them." (I should watch them!) "Art is profoundly connected with life. It is nowise superfluous."

"Art . . . is of sight or hearing. Sight and hearing are the distant senses." (The *spectators*' senses ; they cannot *touch* or *smell* the actors or actresses.) . . . "Taste and touch are too intimate." "In Russian, as Tolstoi has pointed out, the word for beauty (*krasata*) means . . . only *that which pleases the sight*."

"To see a thing, to feel a thing, as a work of art, we must, then, become for the time *unpractical*, must be loosed from the fear and flurry of actual living, must become spectators." (What! do I enjoy watching a man drink a glass of beer as much as I do drinking it myself?) "Why can we not live and look at once?" "If we watch a friend drowning we do not note the exquisite curve made by his body as he falls into the water, nor the play of sunlight on the ripples as he disappears below the surface ; we should be inhuman, æsthetic fiends if we did." "If we want to . . . watch the cumbrous grace of a bear, we prefer that a cage should intervene. The cage cuts off the need for motor reactions ; it interposes the needful physical and moral distance, and we are free for contemplation. . . . A man intent on action is like a horse in blinkers . . ." etc.

" By neglecting most of the things we see and hear, we can focus on those which are important for action : we can cease to be potential artists, and become efficient practical human beings, but it is only by . . . a great renunciation as to the things we see and feel. The artist does just the reverse." " The ordinary man often thinks the artist a fool, or, if he does not go so far as that, is made vaguely uncomfortable by him, never really understands him. The artist's focus, all his system of values, is different, his world is a world of images which are his realities."

So *ritual* is a representation " always with a practical end." Art is a representation " cut loose from immediate action." " It may seem strange to some that the decay of religious faith should be an impulse to the birth of art." But all the same it is : and once we have got rid of the notion that stamping about and screaming is going to do any good, half can go and sit down on the marble seats, and, watching the other half, watch in a sense themselves—with profound admiration and astonishment. This is *art.*

The reader at this point will collect his wits. The man of action can neither *understand* nor *feel.* He is too busy. (Quite right ! No : that's not right !) He can't *feel,* because you cannot *feel* and at the same time *act.* Being a man-of-action, he realises that by dancing he will make the corn grow, and by singing make the sun shine, and the mare foal. Next, he ceases to believe that that is likely : he ceases to be a man of action, and becomes an artist. He looks on. (Is this the same man ? What a change !) He appreciates now (as though he were the sun-god watching his own magical dance) how extremely pretty it is : how it *should* have made the sun shine, even if it didn't, and the mare foal again. It is indeed just as good as though it *had*—and he has become a *god* into the bargain. (Oh, this is capital !)

Curtain. Gotterdammerung ! The fun is over.

Space does not allow me to quote Miss Harrison more fully, I would, for the rest, refer the reader to the book itself : but from these few contrasted extracts (with the appropriate comments of the sort of reader envisaged) it will be seen that a certain emotional confusion reigns in the pages of this small, popular, very learned book, and so, it is assumed, in the mind

of this very learned would-be *modern* lady. The confusion arises from her desire to reconcile that part of her mind emotionally conforming to the democratic ideals of her time, and that part emotionally snobbish about art. It is, in short, the clash of two snobberies, and the desire to serve two masters, that involves her in the fifty turbid discursive pages of almost inextricable muddle-headedness with which her treatise terminates. Tolstoi becomes Marinetti : artists are implored to rush into the street and squeeze all the motor-horns within reach : art is very nice and respectable, and "life" is first rate too : they do not agree, but that doesn't matter.

"We English are not supposed to be an artistic people, yet art, in some form or another, bulks large in the national life. We have theatres, a National Gallery, we have art-schools, our tradesmen provide for us "art-furniture," we even hear, absurdly enough, of "art-colours." Moreover, all this is not a matter of mere antiquarian interest, we do not simply go and admire the beauty of the past in museums ; a movement towards or about art is all alive and astir among us. We have new developments of the theatre, problem plays, Reinhardt productions, Gordon Craig scenery, Russian ballets. We have new schools of painting treading on each other's heels with breathless rapidity : Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, Futurists. Art—or at least the desire for, the interest in, art —is assuredly not dead.

Moreover, and this is very important, we all feel about art a certain obligation, such as some of us feel about religion. There is an "ought" about it. Perhaps we do not really care much about pictures and poetry and music, but we feel we 'ought to.'"

Art "bulks large" with "we English" : we don't care much about pictures and poetry, but art "bulks large." We go to a picture gallery as we go to church : for we are a people with a conscience, etc., etc.

What is useful in her book is her description of the process of the differentiation of the original dithyrambic mass, whereby *art* is born. The introduction of the Homeric cycle governs the Attic stage. But "A heroic age, happily for society, cannot last long. . . . The world has seen several heroic ages, though it is, perhaps, doubtful if it will ever see another."

"Why," however, "was this influx of heroic poetry . . . of such immense influence on, and importance to, the development of Greek dramatic art? Why had it power to change the old, stiff, ritual dithyramb into the new and living drama?" *Because* "In the old ritual dance *the individual was nothing*, the choral band, the group everything." But "in the heroic saga *the individual is everything*." That was the reason.

Again: "In the primitive choral dance all three—artist, work of art, spectator—were used, or rather not yet differentiated." Greek art, as seen in the Attic drama, is the history of this differentiation, separating out, of (1) the artist, (2) the work of art, and (3) the spectator. This is *art*.

Ritual on the other hand is as follows:

(1) Ritual is "always collective."

(2) Primitive man is "weak in individuality."

(3) "At the beginning of things" men's impulses were "deeper, vaguer, more emotional."

To-day we have started the return journey *back* to ritual, Miss Harrison tells us. In her *finale* ACTION is uppermost once more—"Thanks be to God."

"For those of us who are not artists or original thinkers the life of the imagination, and even of the emotions, has been perhaps too long lived at second hand, received from the artist ready-made and felt. To-day, owing largely to the progress of science, and a host of other causes social and economic, life grows daily fuller and freer, and every manifestation of life is regarded with a new reverence. With this fresh outpouring of the spirit, this fuller consciousness of life, there comes a need for first-hand emotion and expression. . . . . Art in these latter days goes back as it were on her own steps, recrossing the ritual bridge back to life."

So at the last, having watched with some pain and perplexity the differentiation into artist, spectator, and so forth (with the *terribly* cold marble seats), we are privileged to observe the tide setting back again to those "deeper, vaguer, more emotional regions." Once more the "amateurs" (ἐθελονται) come crowding back: once more we live *collectively*: all men once more are *actors*.

Now this fusion, or uprising of the audience and return of Everyman into the arena or choral acting-place, is, true

enough, occurring universally. But it is not *a return to life*, as a return to a true primitive belief would be. There is a third stage, therefore, with which Miss Harrison does not deal, and of which apparently she is not aware.

Greek humanism is for Miss Harrison, "characteristically a group limitation." "We moderns are in love with the background. Our art is a landscape art." Our art is "the art of a stage, without actors; a scene which is all background, all suggestion. It is an art given us by sheer recoil from science, which has dwarfed actual human life almost to imaginative extinction." It is science, according to Miss Harrison, that has "given us back a world-soul": it is also, she says, science that has given us an art of backgrounds, in which the human individual disappears. It is science that is the great democratising force, in short, of the modern world. Science stands for the theory of *collective* life, art for the doctrine of *individual* life: science for the *dromenon*, art for the *drama;* science for the dithyrambic dance, art for the aloof perfection of the Attic stage.

If it is asked of what *use* art is, it has been put to innumerable uses, and when not interfered with can make a sort of paradise of the world (which, it is unnecessary to say, whenever such a thing has occurred, can no more have been noticed by those privileged to dwell in the midst of it than the abstract beauty of "nature" is experienced, probably, by primitive men). But its great traditional use as a *catharsis* is still its best credential. With religion, magic, or primitive "mystery," usually the crowd has those "backgrounds" just referred to thrown open to it, or there is always a tendency to "fusion" and ecstasy. "The back is knocked out" of the stage. With art men are shown these "backgrounds" too: great art is cut out of the same wild material. But it is as spectators that they survey these terrible truths, with the atmosphere of the distances which art maintains, and the *measure* of its trance, to soften them; and it is the form, no doubt, in which a community less demented than most, and capable of receiving their purges with fortitude and relative calm, would always receive them. But art ceases to be art, or great art at least, when beneath its seductive exterior these ultimate realities are not found. And it is the most perishable of specifics. It

requires great discipline to prefer to watch a game *perfectly* played, rather than kick a ball about clumsily yourself, if you have the option. Very rapidly the banks of spectators turn into a great assembly of "amateurs" (ἐθελονταί) once more. Then comes the phase that Miss Harrison left out: the phase in which a collective "play" is engaged in, in which no "real" or "practical" issues are involved. That is the *bridge* back to primitive life, no doubt: since people cannot "play" and fiddle about for long. The full blind collective ecstasy is not far off when this transition of the *spectators* into *amateurs* has been effected.

Frau Karl Druschki.*

By STEPHEN HUDSON.

HE stopped a moment at a banker's office near the hotel, he knew bankers everywhere, always had the appropriate money and, it seemed, endless quantities of it. I could see him from the carriage talking to the banker, who sat at his table in the window laughing, apparently in genial humour. Presently a servant in shirt sleeves and a white apron came with a bottle and glasses. The banker toasted him, and they both drank. The blazing sun beat down. I watched them under my parasol. The banker had a bald head. He was not old, not more than thirty-seven, and he had good features; a small man, not in size, for he appeared to be large and stout, but in personality, as he sat opposite him, talking. An instant later they came to the door; there was a vine growing over it, and a seat that must be inviting in the shade at evenings. He introduced the banker to me: "Madame will be coming to you when she needs money." They smiled and nodded to each other familiarly. Money is a passage to familiarity when both parties possess it. The banker had an ugly baldness at the top of his head like a tonsure; I always disliked that kind of baldness. He bowed several times, muttering complimentary phrases and, as his client turned to get into the carriage beside me, asked me the usual question with his eyes. Of course, he saw and I was glad he did. I should like to bring discomfort and annoyance to the fat banker, because of his self-complacent expression, his nice well-brushed tail-coat, his stomach and his nasty baldness. He never showed he had noticed the banker's eye, he only looked slightly amused, glanced at me as he put the cushion behind my back, and lit his cigarette. The band was playing on the Casino terrace, and he ordered a table. There were a great many people standing about on the gravel, walking up and down, and fussing about tables. He never fussed; we got ours at once near the steps, but protected

* Frau Karl Druschki is the name of a very beautiful white rose which has neither scent nor thorns.

by the railing so that I could sit in the corner, and he beside me. I was distracted and amused by the crowd. He followed my eyes a moment, and seeing me interested, pulled some letters out of his pocket and put on his glasses. He always did what I wanted at the moment without my asking, I don't know how he guessed. That was the comfort of being with him, and it was a part of his hold on me. I don't think glamour had more than a little to do with it. It pleased me that other women admired him and envied me, but most of them envied me because he was rich and generous, and I had always been with rich and generous men. There was certainly a little fear in it ; I never was certain how much he knew. My silent nature had been an armour, but I did not feel it protected me from him, though he made no sign of seeing. If he had not been what he was in every way I could test, gradually his seeing without showing, his knowing without asking, his answers to unasked questions would, I think, have got on my nerves. He must have understood that also, for, unexpectedly, he sometimes explained a knowledge and in very simple words. He talked very simply to everyone, saying exactly what he meant, and when anyone told him a lie, he smiled. I do not lie with my tongue, I never found it necessary, I could always act one when circumstances required. I had acted one to him from the beginning, a large, consistent, unavoidable lie, for which I had no regret. I could not regret a part of myself. I am what I am, and he was himself. I did not know whether he had yet read that lie. Sometimes I thought so, and I used all the power my subtlety gave me. I wanted to keep him. I could never find another like him. There were no others like him. And if love is not the word, I wanted to give him all that I had to give. I have no smallest notion what he felt for me. He never made a declaration ; his tributes were never in words. He never asked for what he received, he never pleaded his right to anything ; he wrung from me more than any other man. But satisfaction was never in his eyes. That is why I was afraid.

A young man dressed in a grey suit with a light blue tie that matched his eyes sat down at the next table. The waiter brought three cocktails and placed them in front of him. He looked at me, but unobservantly, so that I could continue

noticing him. The blue eyes left my face and wandered to him, then to the crowd, and back again to him reading letters. It amused me that the young man thought I was being ignored ; the knowledge that he was so completely wrong pleased me. He stopped reading and put the letters back in his pocket ; I knew he had not finished them. He glanced casually at the next table, but at the cocktails, not at the man, and asked me if he should remove my wrap. The waiter began serving us. Behind him, two women, young and fashionably dressed, took their seats next to each other ; the young man gave his up, and sat opposite them looking pleased and possessive. They drank their cocktails ; the *chef d'orchestre* came bowing. *Tosca ? Bohême* ? I leant forward a little to see them. The older one was much powdered, her lips were red, she wore a pearl necklace and emerald rings to go with her green dress. She was very blonde. She observed me at once, and I leant back again so that his body interposed between her and me. We talked a little in short sentences, requiring no effort, and while we talked I looked at the other woman. She was a young girl, not more than nineteen, with very brilliant eyes and teeth and skin. She had a radiant smile. Her mouth turned up at the corners, showing the glistening teeth and the pink tongue like a kitten's. She had a charming, not obviously self-conscious manner. I knew she was aware that I was looking at her, that it pleased her, not the less because her companion had noticed my interest, and stared back at me with suspicious impertinence. She must be the young man's wife, an American, with experience.

The band struck up " Vissi d'arte " and he glanced for the first time at them. I knew that the glance, lingering a moment on the face of the girl, was comprehensive ; I knew as he asked me what sweet I wanted he was searching my thoughts. I changed them determinedly ; they hovered above both tables, flickered round the dark head of the girl, the blonde of the woman's, poised a moment on my own hair, *cendré* with a strain of gold, very fine and silky. Hers was coarse hair, and the colour artificial, the younger one's a rich brown, curling naturally behind the ears in delicate kiss-enticing ringlets on the nape of the neck. They played well, he was saying the conductor had temperament—he knew him from Carlsbad ; and he was searching me while he spoke. When coffee was brought,

he turned, asking permission to smoke. I knew it was that he might look at them more closely. "Charming!" he answered the unspoken comment, "I am not surprised you admire her."

He could make acquaintance very easily—the right word at the moment, the suitable gesture. There was always lightness in his phrase and in his voice. The young man answered with a deeper, heavier sweep of words, with the tongue of a talker, of one accustomed to an easy understanding. It was always an entertainment to observe him with a new acquaintance, mastering knowledge without use of many words, adding up, subtracting, then multiplying to make it pleasanter for both. He did this without an air of knowing, without the smallest object. He simply could not help knowing, because the world for him had always been an easy plaything. He talked about them a little afterwards as we walked to the hotel, a few casual words, suggesting to me that he believed we were likely to meet them soon again.

There was little significance to me about the incident. I think I should not have called it an incident or thought about the people again but for him. Quite unusually, he referred to them during the afternoon. We dined alone in our apartment: I did not feel inclined to go to the Casino after our tiring motor journey. He came back early, as always when he went out alone, and found me reading. He stood by the bedside with his hat under his arm. The silver sides of his hair caught the light, and he held his chin between his finger and thumb, pulling the lower lip down a little so that the strong teeth showed. He stood looking down at me, raised my hand to his mouth, asked me if I felt rested, if the bed was comfortable. There was something in his mind to say; he was waiting for an opening—he did not want to make too much of it. "A devoted husband, dear, appeals to me." "And she?" "For that I can give you his assurance. Married during the war, saw her little, has been back but a short time from a mission since the peace. They are in this hotel." He paused; there was more to come, kept till the last deliberately. "He leaves to-morrow." His dark, soft eyes were on mine, searching. They left my eyes, roamed the bed, returned to my book. He envied me being able to read novels—was it interesting? He

lifted my hand again to his mouth slowly; there was a very slight smile in his eyes. "Is there anything more to tell you?" Ah . . . now it came. "The girl has come for company in his absence." I lay looking up at him, I was not sure I showed no interest, for he had stirred it by his greater certainty of knowledge, had constrained me to look into myself, and looking, I discovered what he may have seen. He went slowly to the door. His movements are always measured, like his speech, he never takes a step too many. I think he was born to make some woman pay for her undoing of men. Do I wish I were the woman I believe, but cannot know he thinks me? To be loved and to love passionately—or to give without loving? Can I not offer him more than any woman, though I cannot give that which is not mine to give? To own a world is worth a lie, a lie against a body born to age for the sake of that which does not age. A world is in my keeping, a world belonging to us two, where no other enters. Is he so much man that he must probe and probe till he pierces a mortal heart? Is he not so close to my heart that I lie here thinking of him, with my tired body aching for sleep that my fevered brain will not yield? He knows what I could have from others, and that part was never wanting. All the rest was. It could not be bearable to lose him. I must keep his low voice, his unexpectedness, his serenity. But can I keep him? Has he read the lie?

Scrutinies

(3) John Masefield.

By BERTRAM HIGGINS.

When the sea, fabulously attentive to Britannia, cast up Mr. Masefield, it parted with one of its queerest fish—a fish normal in size and shape, but striped and bedizened by tropical waters, and concealing a monstrous roe. Melville's pioneer message was long since delivered, and Joseph Conrad had disembarked; but the early Edwardians, amused by the contrast of French naturalism and Irish mysticism, and lazily refusing to relate these importations, had come no closer to their heritage than sniffing the brine at Brighton and dispatching their royalty in peaceful dreadnoughts to see and terrorise the world.

Masefield stepped in with his *Salt-Water Ballads* at the moment when the nation's conscience, too roughly salved by Kipling for the humiliations of the Boer War, was in need of a little warm restorative. The *Ballads* sound a thin trumpet-note of romance, rather boyish-manly, like a Scout's, but the idealism of the sentiment is beaten down by the drum-taps of the borrowed idiom. Attitude and art are tentative in the next volume, with a falling inclination towards Celtic fatalism, gratified later in the prose rhythms of *A Mainsail Haul* and *A Tarpaulin Muster*: a poem like *Fragments*, defective but personal, is an indication of something valuable under this facility and swerve of style. And then something happens to Mr. Masefield. So far, his work is what is called promising: the imitativeness of a young technique is no bar to future achievement unless the failures in the borrowed pattern are on a lower level of vitality than the whole. Perhaps Masefield does not quite come through this test, but there are signs of an uneasy sensibility and an emotional force which, if directed by the self-criticising faculty ("the artistic conscience") will be fulfilled in art. Psychologists tell us that during adolescence incidents which at any other period would be minor in their

effect on personality, readily turn into primary ones. " Writer's adolescence " is a period of still more delicate adjustments, because it concerns developments which, being less amenable to the conventions governing conduct, are remediable mainly by inner processes. Masefield's early indecision between two attitudes, as exemplified in his first two volumes of verse, should in the ordinary course have been settled by the emergence of a predominating creative desire, the imaginative equivalent of an effort of will. The drama of his adolescence was the clash between his " heroic " and " æsthetic " tendencies, represented by Kipling and Yeats respectively—a conflict which he could have solved by defining it. That problem was never solved ; and for all his output Masefield to-day remains an adolescent writer.

Consider the general characteristics of his work. The Beauty-hunt to which he spurs himself is a purely reactive ritual, youth's desperate shame for the bodily initiations of puberty. The image he chases over Lollingdon Downs is a tribal fiction with a blurred face ; he never gets near her, and, if he did, personal lineaments are the last thing he would look for in a goddess for whom his feelings are strictly generalised. " She was something too pure and gentle for a wild man like himself. His nature knelt to her." Thus Heseltine and Rhoda in *The Street of To-day*, and Masefield's spirit of reverence has never outgrown its attachment to the crude hypotheses which are society's compromise with nature in the equivocal stages of the individual's development.

" Woman, beauty, wonder, sacred woman,
Spirit moulding man from brute to human " :

the invocation is ineffectual because it is cast in the terms of an archaic need ; and it comes from a poem called " Imagination." The world goes on unravelling its multiplicity to Roger Naldrett, in *Multitude and Solitude*, but " it was his duty to beat back the world before it fouled his inner vision. If he were not careful he would find that his next work would be tainted with some feverish animosity, some personal bitterness or weakness of contempt. It was his duty as a man and as an artist to prevent that, so that his mind might be as a hedged garden full of flowers, or as a clear, unflawed mirror, reflecting only perfect images." Masefield has perhaps by

now discarded the letter of such an aestheticism, but its spirit persists throughout his work as a determinant of the form in which it is conceived. Experience is piled up in successive books (the "heroic" inclination of the author satisfying itself by an eager-seeming cataloguing of external detail), but the heroes themselves are held back from any vital adjustment by the limitations of the interpretative ideas they bring to bear on it. Sard Harker is a pseudo-naïve, a parody of Conrad's dangerously simplified Lord Jim ; his romantic sense of honour, interesting in itself, becomes pitiable when Masefield flourishes it in the face of the tropics as man's strongest weapon against natural evil. Father Garsinton, personifying intellectual evil, is the creation of a mind whose moral uncertainty resents responsible action. The foil to this figure is the little Susan Jones of *Melloney Holtspur*. In this play Masefield entangles the characters in situations which demand a fine sense of good and evil for their proper *dénouement*, and though the scene is filled with prompting spirits and the dialogue lets off a heavy incense of consecration, the shoddiness of the solutions shows how insincere was the assumption of values on which the action depends. Lonny Copshrews, the "ill-living" genius who breaks Melloney's heart, is the prospective victim of the supernatural machinery, but the dramatist, finding himself unable to justify his anathema, calls in little Susan, a sort of "salvation-kid," whose omniscient innocence, backed by a vision of young love, charms away the malice of the ghostly revenge. The muddle of moral categories is complete when Lonny's Spirit, before Melloney's Spirit has been appeased, is allowed to turn his apology into self-justification. "For all my wickedness, I cared for truth and beauty and colour ; three things which have never let man down. I was taunted and despised. I was ragged and starved. But I called those things noble with all my strength, all my life long." The Spirit of Myrtle West, who was seduced by Lonny's friend, does not need appeasement : "she goes out in ecstasy Front Left."

> "O joy of trying for beauty, ever the same,
> You never fail, your comforts never end ;
> O, balm of this world's way ; O, perfect friend ! "

This is Mr. Masefield addressing us directly through the narrative of *Dauber*. Dauber has a similar ambition ; he goes to sea in search of experience and "copy," but his paintings are ruined by the brutal sailors. Concealing his vexation, he decides to postpone his unpopular habit of staring at the seascape ("My Lord, my God, how beautiful it is!"), and prove himself a man at the masthead.

> "It's not been done, the sea, not yet been done,
> From the inside by one who really knows ;
> I'd give up all if I could be the one. . .
> This is the art I've come for, and am learning,
> The sea and ships and men and travelling things.
> It is most proud, whatever pain it brings."

He encounters storm and distinguishes himself, but later falls while furling a sail. Before he dies he exclaims, "'It will go on,'" not knowing his meaning rightly ; and, his canvasses extinct, is buried at sea. Dauber's plight would win our sympathy if his creator, at least, knew his meaning rightly. Set down in the midst of a company whose rough natural ways Mr. Masefield's spleen has perverted into brutalities of Philistinism, his appeal is falsened ; we take sides against the unanalysed prepossession which exalts him and the hysteria with which the claim is enforced. (A similar hysteria persecutes Dick Pargetter in "The Tragedy of Nan" : Masefield's women, Nan and Melloney, can be singularly distasteful when they are made the vessels of it.) *Dauber* has been called a great poem—"great," says one critic, "because of its pictures of the storm, the sea night, the ship entering the calm bay at day-dawn." Such judgments come from a complaisance with the emotional intention which, in all imperfect poetry, perceptibly accompanies the æsthetic achievement. The careless reader is only too likely to mistake the first for the second, and in Masefield this game of substitution assumes the proportions of downright bluff.

> "Then from the hidden waters something surged—
> Mournful, despairing, great, greater than speech,
> A noise like one slow wave on a still beach. . .

' Whales ! ' said the mate. They stayed there all
night long
Answering the horn. Out of the night they spoke,
Defeated creatures who had suffered wrong,
But still were noble underneath the stroke.
They filled the darkness when the Dauber woke ;
The men came peering to the rail to hear,
And the sea sighed, and the fog rose up sheer."

These are average lines from the descriptive passages which have called forth so much enthusiasm. It does not need much alertness to find the cause of their failure : Masefield may possibly have seen whales, but he has never imagined them. " Mournful, despairing, great, greater than speech." The tritely associative first pair of adjectives provide emotionalised comment where the narrative requires an image, and the comment is so deficient in vital force as to depress the curiosity stimulated by the " something " of the preceding line. The comparative construction following—indeed, the whole phrase—is a good example of the substitution process mentioned above ; a good thing might have been made of the " speech " idea, but the imageless " greater " aspires to a moral prestige which will be allowed only by facile victims of a poetic hypnosis. In the second half of the fourth line a metrical foot, at least, is sacrificed to the desire for an easy rhyme-scheme. The sentence " Out of the night . . . underneath the stroke " is obscure in meaning till we realise that, having nothing to say about the subject he has introduced, the poet is making the best of a bad job by using words to evoke an abstract compassion which, with a little luck, may kindle the reader for reception of the next subject. What is this whole lumbering, half-minded passage worth, next to that little flash in Job ?

" Leviathan maketh a path to shine after him ;
One would think the deep to be hoary."

Or Milton ?

" There Leviathan
Hugest of living creatures, in the deep
Stretched like a promontory sleeps or swims,

> And seems a moving land ; and at his gills
> Draws in, and at his breast spouts out the sea."

Or Rimbaud ?

> " J'ai vu fermenter les marais, énormes nasses
> Où pourrit dans les joncs tout un Léviathan,
> Des écroulements d'eaux au milieu des bonaces,
> Et les lointains vers les gouffres cataractant ! "

Or the most casual description of " Moby Dick " ?

> " From this height the whale was now seen some mile or so ahead, at every roll of the sea revealing his high sparkling hump, and regularly jetting his silent spout into the air."

The poem of Masefield's in which he most nearly discards his second-nature falsity is *The Everlasting Mercy*. It has been hailed as " one more of the world's great sudden original poems and one of the greatest religious poems ever born " ; but the effect of that eulogy is qualified by the critic's report of his reactions—" At first we gasped ' Oh ! ' What blasphemy ! What indecency ! Phew ! Then, dazed and unbelieving, one read the long poem again—and again—and again. . . . A challenge to all that mistakes respectability for righteousness . . . a torrent of ' inspiration,' " etc. The " indecency," of no importance in itself, is noteworthy in so far as it produces many instances, rare in Masefield, of a feeling, immanent not aspirant, prolonged beyond a few lines. The social satire of which Saul Kane is made the mouthpiece, though it is weakened by an alliance with the poet's familiar self-pitying exasperations, is protected, to a degree, against the familiar preciosity by the short-winded metre. The question of greatness need not be raised ; judged as a whole, it is impossible to call *The Everlasting Mercy* a *true* poem : Masefield has never recovered from (what we have conceived to be) the mismanagement of his adolescence.

In *Reynard the Fox*, published in 1919, we saw him reaching a point at which the preference for a completely objective theme might have been expected to assist in his liberation. A re-reading of *Reynard* proves any such hope ill-founded. A fever has passed out of his language, but the ravages of the disease remain.

Behind them rode her daughter Belle,
A strange, shy, lovely girl whose face
Was sweet with thought and proud with race,
And bright with joy of riding there.
She was as good as blowing air,
But shy and difficult to know.
The kittens in the barley-mow,
The setter's toothless puppies crawling,
The blackbird in the apple calling,
All knew her spirit more than we.
So delicate these maidens be
In loving lovely helpless things.

Masefield's style has always been more suggestible than assimilative, and these lines have been likened to Chaucer. If the reader troubles to verify the comparison, he will be let in for a painful experience: the metaphysical horror of animism, of death parodying (and persecuting) life. Far better the vilified, and perhaps incestuous, ballad of the *Lollingdon Downs* volume.

" His father clubbed
The girl on the head.
Young Will upped
And shot him dead.

' Now, sister,' said Will,
' I've a-killed father,
As I said I'd kill.
O my love, I'd rather

A-kill him again
Than see you suffer.
O my little Jane,
Kiss good-bye to your brother.' "

There is vitality in that, protoplasmic as poetry, but genuine. Henry James, with narrow-minded justice, condemned Whitman's work on the ground that it " pretends to persuade the soul while it slights the intellect ; because it pretends to gratify the feelings while it outrages the taste." Substitute " perception " for " taste," and you have the germ of the Masefieldian malady neatly isolated for a test.

The Princess (III).

By D. H. LAWRENCE.

She woke with a sudden convulsion, like pain. She was really very cold; perhaps the heavy blankets had numbed her. Her heart seemed unable to beat, she felt she could not move.

With another convulsion she sat up. It was intensely dark. There was not even a spark of fire, the light wood had burned right away. She sat in thick oblivious darkness. Only through a chink she could see a star.

What did she want? Oh, what did she want? She sat in bed and rocked herself wofully. She could hear the steady breathing of the sleeping man. She was shivering with cold; her heart seemed as if it could not beat. She wanted warmth, protection, she wanted to be taken away from herself. And at the same time, perhaps more deeply than anything, she wanted to keep herself intact, intact, untouched, that no one should have any power over her, or rights to her. It was a wild necessity in her that no one, particularly no man, should have any rights or power over her, that no one and nothing should possess her.

Yet that other thing! And she was so cold, so shivering, and her heart could not beat. Oh, would not someone help her heart to beat?

She tried to speak, and could not. Then she cleared her throat.

"Romero," she said strangely, "It is so cold."

Where did her voice come from, and whose voice was it, in the dark?

She heard him at once sit up, and his voice, startled, with a resonance that seemed to vibrate against her, saying:

"You want me to make you warm?"

"Yes."

As soon as he had lifted her in his arms, she wanted to scream to him not to touch her. She stiffened herself. Yet she was dumb.

And he was warm, but with a terrible animal warmth that seemed to annihilate her. He panted like an animal with desire. And she was given over to this thing.

She had never, never wanted to be given over to this. But she had *willed* that it should happen to her. And according to her will, she lay and let it happen. But she never wanted it. She never wanted to be thus assailed and handled, mauled. She wanted to keep herself to herself.

However, she had willed it to happen, and it had happened. She panted with relief when it was over.

Yet even now she had to lie within the hard, powerful clasp of this other creature, this man. She dreaded to struggle to go away. She dreaded almost too much the icy cold of that other bunk.

"Do you want to go away from me?" asked his strange voice. Oh, if it could only have been a thousand miles away from her! Yet she had willed to have it thus close.

"No," she said.

And she could feel a curious joy and pride surging up again in him: at her expense. Because he had got her. She felt like a victim there. And he was exulting in his power over her, his possession, his pleasure.

When dawn came, he was fast asleep. She sat up suddenly.

"I want a fire," she said.

He opened his brown eyes wide, and smiled with a curious tender luxuriousness.

"I want you to make a fire," she said.

He glanced at the chinks of light. His brown face hardened to the day.

"All right," he said, "I'll make it. "

She hid her face while he dressed. She could not bear to look at him. He was so suffused with pride and luxury. She hid her face almost in despair. But feeling the cold blast of air as he opened the door, she wriggled down into the warm place where he had been. How soon the warmth ebbed, when he had gone!

He made a fire and went out, returning after a while with water.

"You stay in bed till the sun comes," he said. "It's very cold."

"Hand me my cloak."

She wrapped the cloak fast round her, and sat up among the blankets. The warmth was already spreading from the fire.

"I suppose we will start back as soon as we've had breakfast?"

He was crouching at his camp-stove making scrambled eggs. He looked up suddenly, transfixed, and his brown eyes, so soft and luxuriously widened, looked straight at her.

"You want to?" he said.

"We'd better get back as soon as possible," she said, turning aside from his eyes.

"You want to get away from me?" he asked, repeating the question of the night in a sort of dread.

"I want to get away from here," she said decisively. And it was true. She wanted supremely to get away, back to the world of people.

He rose slowly to his feet, holding the aluminium frying-pan.

"Don't you like last night?" he asked.

"Not really," she said. "Why? Do you?"

He put down the frying-pan and stood staring at the wall. She could see she had given him a cruel blow. But she did not relent. She was getting her own back. She wanted to regain possession of all herself, and in some mysterious way she felt that he possessed some part of her still.

He looked round at her slowly, his face greyish and heavy.

"You Americans," he said, "You always want to do a man down."

"I am not American," she said. "I am British. And I don't want to do any man down. I only want to go back, now."

"And what will you say about me, down there?"

"That you were very kind to me, and very good."

He crouched down again, and went on turning the eggs. He gave her her plate, and her coffee, and sat down to his own food.

But again he seemed not to be able to swallow. He looked up at her.

"You didn't like last night?" he asked.

"Not really," she said, though with some difficulty. "I don't care for that kind of thing."

A blank sort of wonder spread over his face at these words, followed immediately by a black look of anger, and then a stony, sinister despair.

"You don't?" he said, looking her in the eyes.

"Not really," she replied, looking back with steady hostility into his eyes.

Then a dark flame seemed to come from his face.

"I make you," he said, as if to himself.

He rose and reached her clothes, that hung on a peg: the fine linen underwear, the orange breeches, the fleecy jumper, the blue-and-buff kerchief; then he took up her riding boots and her bead moccasins. Crushing everything in his arms, he opened the door. Sitting up, she saw him stride down to the dark-green pool in the frozen shadow of that deep cup of a valley. He tossed the clothing and the boots out on the pool. Ice had formed. And on the pure, dark green mirror, in the slaty shadow, the Princess saw her things lying, the white linen, the orange breeches, the black boots, the blue moccasins, a tangled heap of colour. Romero picked up rocks and heaved them out at the ice, till the surface broke and the fluttering clothing disappeared in the rattling water, while the valley echoed and shouted again with the sound.

She sat in despair among the blankets, hugging tight her pale-blue cloak. Romero strode straight back to the cabin.

"Now you stay here with me," he said.

She was furious. Her blue eyes met his. They were like two demons watching one another. In his face, beyond a sort of unrelieved gloom, was a demonish desire for death.

He saw her looking round the cabin, scheming. He saw her eyes on his rifle. He took the gun and went out with it. Returning, he pulled out her saddle, carried it to the tarn, and threw it in. Then he fetched his own saddle, and did the same.

"Now will you go away?" he said, looking at her with a smile.

She debated within herself whether to coax him and wheedle him. But she knew he was already beyond it. She sat among her blankets in a frozen sort of despair, hard as hard ice with anger.

He did the chores, and disappeared with the gun. She

got up in her blue pyjamas, huddled in her cloak, and stood in the doorway. The dark-green pool was motionless again, the stony slopes were pallid and frozen. Shadow still lay, like an after-death, deep in this valley. Always in the distance she saw the horses feeding. If she could catch one ! The brilliant yellow sun was half way down the mountain. It was nine o'clock.

All day she was alone, and she was frightened. What she was frightened of she didn't know. Perhaps the crackling in the dark spruce wood. Perhaps just the savage, heartless wildness of the mountains. But all day she sat in the sun in the doorway of the cabin, watching, watching for hope. And all the time her bowels were cramped with fear.

She saw a dark spot that probably was a bear roving across the pale grassy slope in the far distance, in the sun.

When, in the afternoon, she saw Romero approaching, with silent suddenness, carrying his gun and a dead deer, the cramp in her bowels relaxed, then became colder. She dreaded him with a cold dread.

" There is deer-meat," he said, throwing the dead doe at her feet.

" You don't want to go away from here," he said. " This is a nice place."

She shrank into the cabin.

" Come into the sun," he said, following her. She looked up at him with hostile, frightened eyes.

" Come into the sun," he repeated, taking her gently by the arm, in a powerful grasp.

She knew it was useless to rebel. Quietly he led her out, and seated himself in the doorway, holding her still by the arm.

" In the sun it is warm," he said. " Look, this is a nice place. You are such a pretty white woman, why do you want to act mean to me ? Isn't this a nice place ? Come ! Come here ! It is sure warm here."

He drew her to him, and in spite of her stony resistance, he took her cloak from her, holding her in her thin blue pyjamas.

" You sure are a pretty little white woman, small and pretty," he said. " You sure won't act mean to me—you don't want to, I know you don't."

She, stony and powerless, had to submit to him. The sun shone on her white, delicate skin.

"I sure don't mind hell fire," he said, "after this."

A queer, luxurious good-humour seemed to possess him again. But though outwardly she was powerless, inwardly she resisted him, absolutely and stonily.

When later he was leaving her again, she said to him suddenly:

"You think you can conquer me this way. But you can't. You can never conquer me."

He stood arrested, looking back at her, with many emotions conflicting in his face—wonder, surprise, a touch of horror, and an unconscious pain that crumpled his face till it was like a mask. Then he went out without saying a word, hung the dead deer on a bough, and started to flay it. While he was at this butcher's work, the sun sank and cold night came on again.

"You see," he said to her as he crouched, cooking the supper, "I ain't going to let you go. I reckon you called to me in the night, and I've some right. If you want to fix it up right now with me, and say you want to be with me, we'll fix it up now and go down to the ranch to-morrow and get married or whatever you want. But you've got to say you want to be with me. Else I shall stay right here, till something happens."

She waited a while before she answered:

"I don't want to be with anybody against my will. I don't dislike you; at least, I didn't, till you tried to put your will over mine. I won't have anybody's will put over me. You can't succeed. Nobody could. You can never get me under your will. And you won't have long to try, because soon they will send someone to look for me."

He pondered this last, and she regretted having said it. Then, sombre, he bent to the cooking again.

He could not conquer her, however much he violated her. Because her spirit was hard and flawless as a diamond. But he could shatter her. This she knew. Much more, and she would be shattered.

In a sombre, violent excess he tried to expend his desire for her. And she was racked with agony, and felt each time she would die. Because, in some peculiar way, he had got hold

of her, some unrealised part of her which she never wished to realise. Racked with a burning, tearing anguish, she felt that the thread of her being would break, and she would die. The burning heat that racked her inwardly.

If only, only she could be alone again, cool and intact! If only she could recover herself again, cool and intact! Would she ever, ever, ever be able to bear herself again?

Even now she did not hate him. It was beyond that. Like some racking, hot doom. Personally he hardly existed.

The next day he would not let her have any fire, because of attracting attention with the smoke. It was a grey day, and she was cold. He stayed around, and heated soup on the petrol stove. She lay motionless in the blankets.

And in the afternoon she pulled the clothes over her head and broke into tears. She had never really cried in her life. He dragged the blankets away and looked to see what was shaking her. She sobbed in helpless hysterics. He covered her over again and went outside, looking at the mountains, where clouds were dragging and leaving a little snow. It was a violent windy, horrible day, the evil of winter rushing down.

She cried for hours. And after this a great silence came between them. They were two people who had died. He did not touch her any more. In the night she lay and shivered like a dying dog. She felt that her very shivering would rupture something in her body, and she would die.

At last she had to speak.

"Could you make a fire? I am so cold," she said, with chattering teeth.

"Want to come over here?" came his voice.

"I would rather you made me a fire," she said, her teeth knocking together and chopping the words in two.

He got up and kindled a fire. At last the warmth spread, and she could sleep.

The next day was still chilly, with some wind. But the sun shone. He went about in silence, with a dead-looking face. It was now so dreary and so like death she wished he would do anything rather than continue in this negation. If now he asked her to go down with him to the world and marry him, she would do it. What did it matter? Nothing mattered any more.

But he would not ask her. His desire was dead and heavy like ice within him. He kept watch around the house.

On the fourth day as she sat huddled in the doorway in the sun, hugged in a blanket, she saw two horsemen come over the crest of the grassy slope—small figures. She gave a cry. He looked up quickly and saw the figures. The men had dismounted. They were looking for the trail.

"They are looking for me," she said.

"Muy bien," he answered in Spanish.

He went and fetched his gun, and sat with it across his knees.

"Oh!" she said. "Don't shoot!"

He looked across at her.

"Why?" he said. "You like staying with me?"

"No," she said. "But don't shoot."

"I ain't going to Pen," he said.

"You won't have to go to Pen," she said. "Don't shoot!"

"I'm going to shoot," he muttered.

And straightaway he kneeled and took very careful aim. The Princess sat on in an agony of helplessness and hopelessness.

The shot rang out. In an instant she saw one of the horses on the pale grassy slope rear and go rolling down. The man had dropped in the grass, and was invisible. The second man clambered on his horse, and on that precipitous place went at a gallop in a long swerve towards the nearest spruce-tree cover. Bang! Bang! went Romero's shots. But each time he missed, and the running horse leaped like a kangaroo towards cover.

It was hidden. Romero now got behind a rock; tense silence, in the brilliant sunshine. The Princess sat on the bunk inside the cabin, crouching, paralysed. For hours, it seemed, Romero knelt behind this rock, in his black shirt, bare-headed, watching. He had a beautiful, alert figure. The Princess wondered why she did not feel sorry for him. But her spirit was hard and cold, her heart could not melt. Though now she would have called him to her, with love.

But no, she did not love him. She would never love any man. Never! It was fixed and sealed in her, almost vindictively.

Suddenly she was so startled she almost fell from the

bunk. A shot rang out quite close from behind the cabin. Romero leaped straight into the air, his arms fell outstretched, turning as he leaped. And even while he was in the air, a second shot rang out, and he fell with a crash, squirming, his hands clutching the earth towards the cabin door.

The Princess sat absolutely motionless, transfixed, staring at the prostrate figure. In a few moments the figure of a man in the Forest Service appeared close to the house ; a young man in a broad-brimmed Stetson hat, dark flannel shirt, and riding-boots, carrying a gun. He strode over to the prostrate figure.

" Got you, Romero ! " he said aloud. And he turned the dead man over. There was already a little pool of blood where Romero's breast had been.

" H'm ! " said the Forest Service man. " Guess I got you nearer than I thought."

And he squatted there, staring at the dead man.

The distant calling of his comrade aroused him. He stood up.

" Hullo, Bill ! " he shouted. " Yep ! Got him ! Yep ! Done him in, apparently."

The second man rode out of the forest on a grey horse. He had a ruddy, kind face, and round brown eyes, dilated with dismay.

" He's not passed out ? " he asked anxiously.

" Looks like it," said the first young man, coolly.

The second dismounted and bent over the body. Then he stood up again, and nodded.

" Yea-a ! " he said. " He's done in all right. It's him all right, boy ! It's Domingo Romero."

" Yep ! I know it ! " replied the other.

Then in perplexity he turned and looked into the cabin, where the Princess squatted, staring with big owl eyes from her red blanket.

" Hello ! " he said, coming towards the hut. And he took his hat off. Oh, the sense of ridicule she felt ! Though he did not mean any.

But she could not speak, no matter what she felt.

" What'd this man start firing for ? " he asked.

She fumbled for words, with numb lips.

" He had gone out of his mind ! " she said, with solemn, stammering conviction.

" Good Lord ! You mean to say he'd gone out of his mind ? Whew ! That's pretty awful ! That explains it then. H'm ! "

He accepted the explanation without more ado.

With some difficulty they succeeded in getting the Princess down to the ranch. But she, too, was not a little mad.

" I'm not quite sure where I am," she said to Mrs. Wilkieson, as she lay in bed. " Do you mind explaining ? "

Mrs. Wilkieson explained tactfully.

" Oh, yes ! " said the Princess. " I remember. And I had an accident in the mountains, didn't I ? Didn't we meet a man who'd gone mad, and who shot my horse from under me ? "

" Yes, you met a man who had gone out of his mind."

The real affair was hushed up. The Princess departed east in a fortnight's time, in Miss Cummins' care. Apparently she had recovered herself entirely. She was the Princess, and a virgin intact.

But her bobbed hair was grey at the temples, and her eyes were a little mad. She was slightly crazy.

" Since my accident in the mountains, when a man went mad and shot my horse from under me, and my guide had to shoot him dead, I have never felt quite myself."

So she put it.

Later, she married an elderly man, and seemed pleased.

The Re-Creation of Poetry.

The Use of "Negative" Emotions.

An effect of the triumph of the romantic movement in the last century has been to separate the poet from the subjects which abound in ordinary social life, and particularly from those emotions engendered by the clash of personality and the hostility of circumstances. A distinct bias has been created against the expression of particular grievances, which are supposed to offend against the proper attitude to poetry. This convention is as dangerous as the distinction which the French classicists draw between noble and vulgar emotions, and has a similar reflection in its effect on the poet's vocabulary —the erection of a literary language. Certain words become sacrosanct and are repeatedly invited to contribute, not for themselves but for the prestige they bring with them. The same prejudice towards a definite poetic suitability accounts for the contemporary preponderance of "nature" themes and imagery drawn from the back-garden of the week-end cottage. Under the pressure of this romantic theory personality and, still more, personalities have been squeezed out of contemporary verse. This is partly caused, no doubt, by the extension of the audience. It is doubtful if subjective poetry (that is, poetry which is not communal like the epic, drama, or narrative) is, by its own nature, capable of being stretched over such a wide area as that covered by the modern publisher. In fact, it demands an audience homogeneous in culture, and to some extent in its attitude to life, otherwise the difficulties of communication cannot be overcome, and the poet must fall back on commonplace, coarse reactions, or invest his small genuine discovery with a theatrical grandeur in order to get it a hearing.

The modern poet is to his audience an author, not a man. It is interested in his more generalised emotions, not in his relations with the life and people round him. Yet to himself the poet should be in the first place a man, not an author.

He should not be conscious of a distinction between the sensations he gets from his immediate contact with things and the sensations he uses as the material of his art. At present he is inhibited from expressing a set of emotions (those we call negative emotions) because of a prejudice against them which is based on a temporary social queasiness. With what consternation would the critics and the public receive from a reputable poet such furious but measured invective as that with which Churchill attacked the dying Hogarth! I shall not quote that passage on Hogarth's physical ruin, which begins :

With all the symptoms of assur'd decay . . .

since it is fairly well known. An assault from another direction shows exactly the kind of subject from which the modern poet is cut off, though not because he is unfamiliar with it :

Oft have I known Thee, Hogarth, weak and vain,
Thyself the idol of thy awkward strain,
Thro' the dull measure of a summer's day,
In phrase most vile, prate long long hours away,
Whilst Friends with Friends all gaping sit and gaze
To hear a Hogarth babble Hogarth's praise.

Churchill has little verbal delicacy and none of the fatal wit of Pope ; he stuns his opponent under the cumulate blows of the obvious. But he is also capable of varying the tone of his anger, and the impression we receive from the whole of the Epistle to Hogarth is not that of a small dog snarling at a big one ; it is really sensitive, and so poetic, indignation. Apart from the political issues involved, such as Hogarth's antagonism to Churchill's hero, Wilkes, it is a poem of the repulsion one personality may exert on another, the expression of the emotion with which one sophisticated social being may regard another, and made more poignant by the exploitation of Hogarth's decrepitude. Such material is taboo to contemporary taste ; the artist is unable to approach it with an unprejudiced mind, since a low sort of agreement to universal solicitude has been reached by the modern community. In this respect the world of the eighteenth century is almost as remote from us as that of the Satyricon. Could we tolerate the innocent opportunism of the Matron of Ephesus except in the licensed playground of the classics ?

Churchill is not pre-eminently a satirist; he has not sufficient detachment. He is a poet of invective, passionately absorbed in his subject. He cannot forget the miserable condition of Hogarth, and the thought of the venom which this almost extinct monster had the audacity to breathe out, stirs him to fresh indignant eloquence:

> I dare thy worst, with scorn behold thy rage,
> But with an eye of pity view thy Age;
> Thy feeble Age, in which as in a glass,
> We see how Men to dissolution pass.
> Thou *wretched Being*, whom on Reason's plan,
> So changed, so lost, I cannot call a Man,
> What could persuade thee at this time of life
> To launch afresh into the sea of strife?
> Better for thee, scarce crawling on the earth,
> Almost as much a child as at thy birth,
> To have resigned in peace thy parting breath,
> And sunk unnoticed in the arms of death.

Verse like this, though not often so fine as this, formed a not negligible part of the reading-matter of the eighteenth century; to-day it has no survivors, and by some canons of criticism it would seem that we are well rid of it. It would most commonly be censured as unpoetic, since the term "poetry" tends to be narrowed down to expressions of certain kinds of experiences. Blake, who is qualified as an authority here, drew without immediate discrimination on his mundane comprehensions as well as on his celestial apprehensions:

> When Sir Joshua Reynolds died
> All Nature was degraded;
> The King dropped a tear into the Queen's ear,
> And all his pictures faded.

There is no doubt that literature suffers from the absence of a socialised medium to carry off these reactions, explosions of the spleen or long-rumoured fulminations, and bring about that relief and cleansing of the mind which is one of the functions of expression. Such "negative" responses, which religion has exiled in forms of demons, are essential components of any fully satisfying work: So long as they are ignored we may continue to have a poetry fit for

adolescents, but not for men, and the judgment of the common person, that poetry is "sloppy," will be quite justified.

Emotion acts not unlike such a fluid as the early scientists invented to explain the effects of electricity; it has really one continuous circular movement, but to the subject it appears to have two, parallel and in opposite directions. That is to say, it has a positive and a negative pole; it can be orientated, at its extreme, in either of two ways: as delight in, or digust with, an object. Romantic poetry is always the expression of one of these extremes, but, since reactions are rarely so pure as to be fit to be represented as ecstasy, or complete revulsion, a great deal of the poetry based on this convention fails to satisfy modern sophistication. We need a poetry in which the moods are more subtly balanced. But, the more discordant the elements of a poem and the more freely they are associated, the greater becomes the difficulty of creating an aesthetic entity to bring about the catharis which is the function of a poem. In the romantic convention this is achieved by an assertion transcending the values of ordinary emotional experience, and very effective it may be, but, like all phantasmal satisfactions, in its continued employment it leads to impotence; the abused nerves are stretched beyond the limit of responsiveness.

The poetry of the negative emotions, of those arising from disgust with the object, provides the means for a whole series of responses in parts of the mind which have been lying fallow for nearly two hundred years. This contemporary value is greater than its absolute value, for it shares with the romantic lyric the paucity of the too-sharply differentiated response, the facile catharsis. Even, since delight is more valued socially than disgust, an aphrodisiac more than an anaphrodisiac, it is likely to be always under estimated by criticism; but this natural prejudice should not be allowed to obscure, as it too frequently does, the perfection of expression the negative poem may achieve, as for instance in the concluding lines of the *Dunciad*.

Swift is a great master of this kind of poetry. His verse has no pleasure-value beyond that of its symmetry and concision, but it is the most intricate labyrinth of

personality that any poet has built round himself, not excepting Donne. It is characteristic that the study of "negative" emotions in poetry should tend to centre particularly in the fact of personality. That Swift was morbid is a commonplace; his verse would supply a text-book of psycho-pathology with as much material as it could use. The interest for the literary critic lies in Swift's success in transforming this material into forms of art. As a preliminary, we may examine the conclusion of one of his most repugnant descriptions, "The Lady's Dressing Room":

> When Celia all her glory shows,
> If Strephon would but stop his nose . . .
> He soon will learn to think like me
> And bless his ravished eyes to see
> Such order from confusion sprung,
> Such gaudy tulips raised from dung.

After the long and exhaustive inventory which precedes them, these lines produce an expansion which is of the nature of a catharsis. It is effected by the sudden breaking of the monotonous revulsion with the introduction of a mass of irony and the final completely satisfying plastic image. Without sacrificing the integrity of his disgust he draws up the blind on a landscape towards which the mind may leap with justified delight, since the idea of erecting order out of chaos is an absolutely valuable one, whatever the implication in this particular instance. After this momentary concession Swift brings down the shade again with the last word, rhyme-enforced, but the image floats on in the consciousness. A similar process of expression, more complex æsthetically, and with the positive bias uppermost, may be observed in such of Baudelaire's poems as the "Hymne à la Beauté" or in "L'Amour du Mensonge," which concludes:

> Qu 'importe ta bêtise ou ton indifférence ?
> Masque ou décor, salut ! J'adore ta beauté !

Catharsis is a term which should perhaps be limited to works in which the emotion is objectified in characters and action. Yet an analogous process is the essential of success in a poem. A poem must, at some point or another, release, enable to flow back to the level of active life, the emotions

caught up from life and pent in the æsthetic reservoir. Otherwise the poem is an artifice, a wax effigy in a glass case, a curiosity. In a poem there may be several such points of release, or of partial release, and it seems necessary that the predominant release should take place sufficiently near the end of the poem to be held in the consciousness till the poem is concluded. It need not take place in the last lines of a poem, though in fact it often does, but this is an effect which becomes mechanical and may be tiresome to sophisticated readers. The final couplet of the Shakespearean sonnet imposes this localisation on a poet; it is a demand which is sometimes disadvantageous to Shakespeare himself. All fully-evolved formalistic structures, like the heroic couplet and the ballade, are susceptible to this automatism; lacking the element of surprise, their effectiveness as agents of the release is quickly diminished.

It seems that an early step to be taken, if poetry is to be liberated so that it may become a natural form of expression in the modern world, is an examination of the kinds of effect which have been employed to bring about the essential release.

E. R.

(To be continued.)

Comments and Reviews

Mr. Eliot's Criticism

HOMAGE TO DRYDEN. By T. S. Eliot. The Hogarth Essays. (Hogarth Press, 3*s.* 6*d.*)

The title of this volume is misleading, for the two more important of the three essays included are devoted to the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century. Though short, these essays contain probably the most penetrating body of observation on the metaphysical poets that has yet appeared in English, and it is nothing less than a calamity for literature that Mr. Eliot should have been compelled to discontinue the book, "beginning with Chapman and Donne, and ending with Johnson," which, he tells us in the preface, he once projected. He was admirably fitted for the work both by his gifts and his predilections; and the book, had it been completed, would not only have enriched the literature of criticism, but would also have stimulated, by making it more conscious of its aims, the poetry of to-day.

Mr. Eliot's diagnosis of the increasing psychological debility of English poetry since the time of the Elizabethans and their immediate successors is sufficiently well known, but here it may be briefly stated again. The poets of these eras, he says, "possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience." Afterwards—Mr. Eliot attributes the evil to Milton and Dryden—"a dissociation of sensibility set in." Poetry occupied itself only with certain classes of experience, not with "any kind of experience." Of the verse of the eighteenth century poets, Pope, Collins, Gray, Johnson, and that of the romantic poets, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Tennyson, this was equally true. From this poverty of the poetic spirit, this failure of poetry to deal completely with experience, sentimentality, among many other evils, arose. The main problem of the poet now is to reintegrate this poetic consciousness which for two centuries has been split up, and to deal with experience completely again. But this he will do successfully only if, among other things, he knows and steeps himself in, and does not imitate, the poetry in the English tradition in which this has already been done.

This bald summary does small justice to a very notable analysis of English poetry, but it may serve to indicate what a wealth of application, not only to the poetry of the past, but to that of our day, would have flowed from the analysis had Mr. Eliot written his projected survey. That this analysis is accepted as a truism by intelligent people to-day is due chiefly to Mr. Eliot; the trouble

is that it is very loosely accepted, too loosely to be of effectual use to the poet. Mr. Eliot has always striven to make as exact as possible the implications of his theory. He has tried to show the necessary connection with a sensibility capable of devouring any kind of experience, of a habit of mind in a certain sense philosophical—or, at least, intellectually curious—and of that with a poetry which will be at need " simple, artificial, difficult, or fantastic." He has reiterated that " the possible interests of a poet are unlimited ; the more intelligent he is the better " ; and this, as he is careful to demonstrate, is not merely a pious opinion, but a fact which may be deduced from a study of great poetry. He has shown admirably that poetry which dispenses with these qualities —with what might be called psychology—is bound sooner or later to become sentimental. But, best of all, he has not demonstrated all this on the plane of general ideas ; he has been interested rather in the actual ways in which this more complete poetic sensibility works and can work, showing how and in what terms the unlimited interests of the poet have been and may be again translated into poetry, and what have been the uses and possibilities for the poet of the " simple, artificial, difficult, and fantastic." Were the body of Mr. Eliot's criticism larger—three or four times larger—than it is, its influence on contemporary poetry would perhaps be decisive. It is, one feels, a misfortune that it has not been decisive.

The danger of criticism such as this, which has its eye disinterestedly on possibilities of the English poetic tradition which have been overlooked or unfulfilled, is that it tends to exalt poets, however small, who have expressed some of those possibilities, at the expense of others, however great, who have not. Mr. Eliot's criterion of poetry becomes insensibly a pragmatic one, and the poet who is more stimulating than another to this age becomes to him not only stimulating but sometimes, one feels, great. This fault is more injurious than it seems : it gives an effect of derangement of values. For example, the excellent essay on Marvell in this volume would be calculably more important if it did not contain a depreciatory reference to Milton. Such things throw a critical judgment out of proportion, the last thing, one imagines, that Mr. Eliot desired. But after one has encountered in all of the three essays in this volume an exasperated sentence on Milton, one begins to wonder if Mr. Eliot is in reality capable of appreciating the greatness of Milton's poetry, and although the doubt is dismissed as unjust, a certain feeling of insecurity has been given. It is bound to be intensified when one reads, " I have long felt that the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, even much of that of inferior inspiration, possesses an elegance and a dignity absent from the popular and pretentious verse of the Romantic Poets and their successors." Wordsworth, the greatest of the Romantic poets, is neither popular nor pretentious, and at his best he has a dignity far less assailable, because his own, than that of

Johnson or Gray, even if in his case it is incompatible with elegance. Mr. Eliot's failure—perhaps through impatience—to acknowledge things such as these, lessens the weight of his judgments, and lessens it needlessly. His criticism is more comprehensive and more sound than that of any other writer of this generation, but it would be infinitely better if it were compatible with an appreciation of the importance of Milton as well as of Marlowe, of Wordsworth as well as of Dryden, in the English poetic tradition. Until it is, it will have a faint but damaging, and altogether misleading, resemblance to the criticism of a school.

EDWIN MUIR.

PHYSICO-CHEMICAL EVOLUTION. By CHARLES E. GUYE. Methuen. 6*s.* net.

It is only comparatively recently that the conventional character of scientific concepts has been thoroughly realised. During the nineteenth century, and particularly in England, scientific men were, for the most part, naively realistic. Matter, for example, was regarded as an ultimate reality. The same may be said of the Newtonian space and time, and also, in many cases, of the Newtonian "forces." Such assumptions were always open to philosophical criticism, but it is the progress of science itself which has brought about a radically different estimate of the function and validity of science. A branch of science, such as physics, is essentially an attempt to bestow order and coherence upon a certain region of experience in terms of certain fundamental entities and principles. The difference between the modern scientific outlook and that of the Victorian age is due to our realisation of the fact that these entities and principles are largely arbitrary. In terms of the Newtonian outfit, absolute space and time, inertia, mass, force, and so on, a very good description was given of a certain region of experience. It was, perhaps, natural that scientific men should regard these entities, not as logical fictions invented by the mind to enable it to handle the material of experience in a congenial manner, but as constituents of the independently existing external world. The invention of electron theory and of relativity theory enable us to dispense with the Newtonian outfit, and to describe the same region of experiences more conveniently in terms of quite different fundamental entities. The status of these entities has now, therefore, become clear. They are logically arbitrary logical fictions. A science is, as it were, a game played according to certain rules, or a work of art obeying certain conventions. That science should be successful appears, therefore, to be a miracle. But relativity theory suggests that the universe we discover is the universe we have created, so that the marvellous subjection of nature to our intellectual tastes becomes less paradoxical.

Such is the general outlook on science from which Professor Guye's speculations arise. He is interested to know whether a universal science is possible—that is, whether such primary entities and principles could be logically constructed as would suffice to describe the phenomena of life and mind as well as that of matter. He does not think that electrons, atoms, molecules, as at present defined in physics, are sufficiently richly endowed to play convincing rôles in biological and psychological phenomena. If they are dowered with a few more properties than those now attributed to them they may, without hindrance to their occupations in producing purely material phenomena, also serve to " explain " life and mind. There seems to be no objection to be made to this suggestion. The primary entities of physics have become more and more enriched as needs have arisen. In this way the atom, for instance, has developed from a homogeneous incompressible sphere into a highly complicated " miniature solar system." If it has also got to become " living " or " conscious," doubtless the matter could be arranged. But we doubt if science will go that way. It seems more likely that biology and psychology will proceed to develop in considerable confusion until some great genius explains away both " life " and " consciousness," perhaps merging them both into some higher unity, together with that continuum in which Einstein has already merged space, time, and matter. In speculating about a universal science, one is permitted to be fanciful. Professor Guye, however, is not particularly fanciful, but quite sober and thoughtful. To those who like to speculate with decorum, his work may be commended.

J. W. N. Sullivan.

TROY PARK. By Edith Sitwell. Duckworth. 5s. net.

Miss Sitwell's technical skill is such that it compels, first of all, attention to her unusual vision, and, secondly, interest in her point of view. " Troy Park " does little to enhance one's opinion of the former, and leaves a feeling of dissatisfaction that the latter has not a greater value. It is a disappointing book, for though it contains the most interesting work Miss Sitwell has yet published, it reveals her as a lesser poet than one would have been before justified in pronouncing her.

Her qualities are very definite, but not obvious. In the first place she has stated her sensory reactions in a manner fitting and particular to her own perceptions, refusing the ready-to-hand, accepted means of sensuous metaphor and using instead a method of psychological correspondences. The danger incurred was two-fold : the lesser, that of obscurity, the greater that, in increasing the suggestiveness of her epithets, she should too much relax her grip on the reader's imagination. To avoid this she limited her field, so that by the repetition of almost identical processes in slightly

varied contexts, she might develop a consistency of meaning. So Admiral Yang's face " is as flat as the notes of pianolas," and " The child that lies upon the sand Has a face as pastel flat As mechanic piano's notes:" she writes,

> " Like country clouds of clouted cream
> The round and flaxen blond leaves seem,"

and

> " The clouds are bunchéd roses,
> And the bunches seem
> As thick as cream."

Yet, though in this way Miss Sitwell has succeeded in giving to her poetry freshness and malleability, in doing so she has been obliged to restrict herself and tends to become monotonous. It is undoubtedly an achievement, but to what extent more than a technical one could only be judged intuitively until the publication of " Troy Park," and now not definitively.

In her earlier work her insistence on, and the limited use of, her individual manner of writing, suggested a doubt on her part as to its æsthetic validity. Here she is as successful as before only when she writes in the mocking, fantastic vein of *Clown's Luck, Four in the Morning*, or " *I do like to be beside the Sea-side.*" Even then she is sometimes dependent on old themes and too apt to be carried away by the facility of rhyming very arbitrarily connected words and of associating ideas by their face-value. When her tone becomes elegiac, however, her manner is seen to arise not from the originality of her point of view, but from a technical perversity which strives to forge a vision that is not æsthetically justified by the content. This does not, of course, imply that Miss Sitwell is insincere. It means that the originality of her vision—a limited one—is purely sensory and does not enable her to see the harmony which creates poetic value. There **are** passages of great verbal sensitiveness in *The Child Who Saw Midas, Colonel Fantock, The Pleasure Gardens* and elsewhere, but they are usually rhetoric unessential to the development of the theme. Without them the poems appear in the commonplace nudity of sluggishly trite concepts, as elaborations of such *clichés* as :

> " a thousand legends
> Of unseen beauty that will never die."

or

> " A world that is yet undreamt, unborn,
> Where never a shade is of cruelty or scorn."

Such passages as the opening of the first poem, or as :

> " When night came sounding like the growth of trees,
> My great-grandmother bent to say good-night,
> And the enchanted moonlight seemed transformed
> Into the silvery tinkling of an old
> And gentle music-box that played a tune

Of Circean enchantments and far seas,
Her voice came lulling as the splash of these,"

are so immediately pleasing as to blind one to the hollowness which they screen, but one's judgment after reading the whole book can only praise Miss Sitwell as a virtuoso.

DOUGLAS GARMAN.

FIRST POEMS. By EDWIN MUIR. Hogarth Press. 4s. 6d. net.

There is little in this first book of poems to arrest the attention, and yet behind the measured beat of the verse one feels a dignity of thought that refuses to be hustled by the conflicting violences of the moment. Mr. Muir writes coolly and without strain, urbanely, sometimes dully, and his thought moves at the same level. His limitations are not dissembled under a pseudo-brilliance or pretentious technique, and this straightforwardness is a quality setting his work apart from much that is noisy opportunism. Almost all the poems are written in conventional decasyllabic metre, and, with the exception of the ballads, one feels that this form is as yet the most suitable for Mr. Muir. His attempts to write in free verse do not come off; they lack a definite and individual rhythm. In the poem "Horses" his imagination works clearly and forcefully:

"But when at dusk with steaming nostrils home
They came, they seemed gigantic in the gloam,
And warm and glowing with mysterious fire,
Which lit their smouldering bodies in the mire.

Their eyes as brilliant and as wide as night
Gleamed with a cruel apocalyptic sight.
Their manes the leaping ire of the wind
Lifted with rage invisible and blind."

or in *Reverie*, where he writes of lovers,

"... those two, who, in half-dumb talk,
With broken gestures, and half-shapen speech,
In unintelligible rapture walk,
Too far for vain and longing thought to reach."

This latter poem is the most effective in the book for the reason that, without a direct statement, it determines a very definite attitude.

Of the ballads the one "Of Eternal Life" has taken too much from "The Ancient Mariner," but "Hector in Hades" is a very apt fitting of the form to the content, and, in the "Ballad of the Flood," written in dialect, there are signs of a much freer manipulation of language, which, if it were developed, would greatly increase Mr. Muir's power.

D. M. G.

PARALLAX. By NANCY CUNARD. Hogarth Press. 3s. 6d. net.

Miss Cunard's title is aptly chosen. Her poem is an attempt to express an attitude without recourse to the conventional method of *trompe-l'œil*, which subordinates the adjunctive processes to a unity of perspective that is psychologically inaccurate. She realises that an idea is not perceived in isolation, and, instead of using her art in trying to isolate it, she accepts the contingent emotive and mental currents it sets up, allowing to them their original force undiverted by preconceptions. She is not, of course, original in this—Laforgue and Mr. Eliot, to mention only two, have already proved the poetic value of her method—but sometimes she writes vigorously and individually. It is difficult to show this by quotation, for her vigour is in the action of the poem rather than in its parts. One feels an intensity which, on analysis, breaks down into echoes of other voices and pastiche.

" I that am seed, root and kernel-stone
" Buried in the present, I that exact fulfilment from every hour
Now tell you :
Accept all things, accept—if only to *be aware*."
" I am most surely at the beginning yet.
If so, contemporaries, what have you done ? "

The idiom is Whitman's, and the thought. Miss Cunard has accepted much and is aware, but she has not yet reduced her awareness to coherency. One feels that, and also that the discipline she needs must be exercised by her own personality and not by the influences to which she submits. In imitating—the word is not too strong—" The Waste Land," Miss Cunard has followed a good, but dangerous model too slavishly.

" In the rim of the tide along Commercial Street
You meet one like you for an hour or two "—

and

" And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street.
O City, City, I can sometimes hear . . . "

or,

" By the Embankment I counted the grey gulls . . .
. . . .
In Battersea I drifted, acquiescent . . .
. . .
At Wimbledon . . .
In Gravesend . . .
. . .
Kew in chestnut-time, September in Oxford Street "

and the end of Part III in Mr. Eliot's poem, are too close parallels to escape the accusation of plagiarism. One does, however, admire Miss Cunard's intention of using an idiom that is not worn out nor divorced by association from experience. D. M. G.

AN INDIAN ASS. By Harold Acton. Duckworth, 4*s.* 6*d.*

There is in this second volume of Mr. Acton's poems the same crudity of thought and expression which was noticeable in "Aquarium." It is an utterance of boredom and disgust by one who would dissemble these ruins under a fantastic pleasure-dome in which to exercise the strange modes of his imagination. As an inscription to one of the poems he quotes from "The Duchess of Malfi":

Talk to me somewhat quickly,
Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

These lines might well have served as a motto for the whole book. Mr. Acton talks quickly, and often at random, in an effort to achieve a positive point of view in the face of the disillusion which ensues from his glances at a world sinning against his limited æsthetic ideal. The cursoriness of these glances robs his satire of force and often detracts from the value of his imaginative statement. About the former there is a coarseness of perception which singles out the obvious, as when he writes:

And pleasures, money, all are volatile,
For after belching Pol-Roger the bile
Will wreak revenge.

or, as in the poem "After":

They do not cower
Before the charabancs' toot toot a toot
And men who bring their sandwiches to boot,
And break beer-bottles where men's souls were torn
By invisible billion hands . . . where agony was born.

As a descriptive writer Mr. Acton is not frequently more successful. He falls back on such bizarre expressions as:

. . . beautiful in death
As one that stumbles on a slumber, falls
On downy-wingéd doze of braided air.

or destroys an effect by incoherent sequences of qualification. When he says:

Death clanks his rusty mail and flaps his wings
And ogling, draws the man into a dance,

one cannot with certainty reassemble the disparate parts of the image. In poems dependent on exotic imagery he is at his best, when he is "dangling a silly mandrake root," but the thinness of such matter is revealed by the necessity under which one feels him to be, of throwing to reality a prosaic life-line, as:

'I do not care a damn,' the train replies.

D. M. G.

THE TWELVE SAINTS. By Ruth Manning Sanders. Christophers. 7s. 6d.

It is quite proper that the young novelist should perplex himself and his readers with a number of insufficiently considered ideas, since, so effective is success upon the prematurely successful, if he begins with a small thing done neatly, he is unlikely to improve in future work upon anything but the neatness. "The Twelve Saints" is rather confused. It would have been a better book if, regardless of all else, Miss Sanders had contented herself with portraying a number of artists and art-mongers. She has a rich sense of character, unforced humour, and a fresh, bold mind. But the extraneous material which clogs the comedy assures us that she will develop. What matter that she has this once failed in her attempt to show reflected in the world of ideas the conflicts of the world of phenomena; that her symbolism is incoherent, her imagery dull and her treatment of the more powerful emotions comparatively superficial?

Faith but not, I think, history, supports the suggestion that in the middle ages the relations of the artist with his public were untroubled, and that what the one wrought for no vulgar profit from the fulness of his heart was by the other joyfully and reverently appreciated. A pretty suggestion, true or false. And a useful criterion whereby to judge the artist who compromises with commerce as well as the artist who, in despair of attaining a wider recognition, studies the whims of a small coterie. These and other types might be seen in the town of St Judd's, and be depressed by the examination of the Abbey cloisters, whose magnificent statuary recalls noble devotion. Even Gregory Dunn, dealer in artistic furniture, detects something offensive to him in the sculptured saints, his sensibilities perhaps sharpened by the fact that his father had been one of those upright craftsmen who used pegs instead of glue, to the great detriment of his declining trade. It may be also that Ann's ineffective religiosity and Elizabeth's simple paganism should be regarded as fragments broken from a vanished whole. But about this some doubt is necessary. The author's interest in living creatures becomes too vigorous for her idealism, and the saints and stars and so on are perfunctorily treated.

What Miss Sanders has done conspicuously well is to work out, for her own use at least, an alternative to the irony with which so many modern authors assure us that they find the emotions of their characters faintly ridiculous, and to the exhortations of the elder novelist that we should mingle our own tears with their puppets. Simon and Bone are both fools, both irritating. The deepest grief of the one is obviously to be ascribed to wounded vanity, and most of the other's tragedy is due to a physical disease, with the result that we recognise their rhetoric to be emotionally insincere. But

this recognition is not made to kill our sympathies. It does not even confine pity to the facile exclamation : " Poor little men ! " For amid the collapse of Miss Sanders' symbolism, her preference for the real over the phenomenal stands true.

It should be added that Miss Sanders' style, though occasionally inflated by passages of conscious prettiness, proves her respectful intimacy with the English language. H. C. HARWOOD.

THE PAINTED VEIL. By SOMERSET MAUGHAM. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Much of what is called cynicism is merely the obverse of an exuberant sentimentality. Its exponents seem once to have believed that life is planned for the pleasure of imbecile children by a creator experienced in the production of slush films, and in losing that faith to have reacted into discrediting all things but lust and greed. Really it is hard to understand how some cheap wit could be found amusing if it were not regarded as the sole alternative to a cheap emotionalism. The audience that laughs to-night at a revue playlet cried the night before at the cinema, and is not aware that the criticism of life can be conducted by any other formula than one of these two, now seeking an unreal comfort in a monstrous misrepresentation of human nature and now relaxing from this effort in the silly-smart mockery of its own delusions. But there is a more serious kind of cynicism, treating actual conduct, yet deficient in truth or beauty because it has not attained to, or has declined from, cognisance of the principles whereby the inconsistencies visible in its material may be reconciled and a unity presented for intellectual enquiry or artistic representation. Mr. Somerset Maugham's cynicism is of this more interesting class.

Kitty of " The Painted Veil," who has been trained, according to the Thackerayan tradition, for a brilliant marriage, blunders into one of no great profit ; and no doubt, whatever the wealth or social position of her husband, would be unable, her life work accomplished, to find any career but the pursuit of trivial amusements, amid which she reckons adultery. She is detected in her first intrigue, and for some time wonders whether her husband, Walter, will condone her infidelity for the sake of his official advancement, or whether he will set her free to make a better marriage. But Walter is an extremist, and carries Kitty off to a cholera-ridden city in the hope that she will meet with an unpleasant death. And now the novel becomes interesting. So far Mr. Maugham has been expending witty but commonplace satire on a pair of casual amorists, and threatens to show us a Kitty, dignified by suffering, regaining her husband's confidence. But while it is true that Kitty begins to grow up, begins to understand the nasti-

ness of what she did, the incidents of the cholera epidemic impress upon her that her husband has been and is making a ridiculous fuss about his private affairs. Against this awful background of disease her sin looks as petty as herself. The cynicism is carried one stage further when Kitty discovers herself to be after her awakening as easily tempted to animal indulgence as before. Beyond that Mr. Maugham cannot go, though the closing pages illustrate not only his limitations but his consciousness of them. To give a climax to this episode he asks us to believe that five minute's conversation is sufficient to put into sympathy persons who have lived together for decades in misunderstanding and indifference approximating to dislike. And the object which Kitty proposes for her future is to bring up her daughter to be frank, and free to seek something more than matrimony; which moral is defective in that it evades a problem by charging the next generation with its solution, and ludicrous in that if Kitty's child has Kitty's temperament she will substitute pre-marital for post-marital unchastity.

The setting of this novel will be tiresomely familiar to readers of "On a Chinese Screen." Mr. Maugham has added no new picturesque detail, and the strong irony of the earlier volume is weakened when repeated in this less rigid form. Moreover, in many places Mr. Maugham has brightened his dialogue by the introduction of romantic or witty phrases alien to the supposed speaker and out of key with the narrative's prevailing tone. The contempt of a resident in South Kensington for a resident in Earl's Court is a perhaps excusable caricature of snobbery; not, however, in itself more amusing than the lusciousness with which the author explains the Mother Superior's aristocratic connections. On the whole "The Painted Veil" is unlikely to increase Mr. Maugham's reputation, though it will, notwithstanding its imaginative langour, delight admirers of his wit, and interest students of his shrewd and honestly sceptical curiosity.

H. C. H.

Among New Books

POEMS AND FABLES. By R. C. Trevelyan. Hogarth Press. 3s. net.

Mr. Trevelyan writes smoothly and sincerely, but without distinction. His imagery is thin and worn:

> " Beauty had I pursued,
> As a child a winged bird, vainly."

Here the epithet is unnecessary; the possibility of a child's pursuing a wingless bird is, in the context, too ludicrous to need elimination.

" O soul," I cried, " the cage is open: spread thy wings," he writes, and of his life,

> " Nought now but a barren wilderness did it seem; "

and of Pleasure,

> " It is like a flame
> . . .
> Vanishing in smoke,"

or

> " A fugitive scent
> . . .
> Laden with memories
> Of childhood hours."

The effect of such poetry is soporific. It can make no impact on the reader's consciousness, because the original impulse can only be faintly perceived through layers of accumulated literature. The most successful of the poems is the last, composed " On a theme from Chuang Tzu."

THE SHADOWGRAPH. By Edward Shanks. Collins. 5s.

Mr. Shanks, in this volume, reveals himself as a very clumsy writer, with little delicacy of thought or sensitiveness to language. He writes very gustily of women, horses, trees and sentiment, but is rarely more invigorating than in this apostrophe to the wind:

> " Blow louder, wind, about
> My square-set house, rattle the windows, lift
> The trap-door to the loft above my head
> And let it fall, clapping. Yell in the trees
> And throw the rotted oak-bough to the ground,
> Flog the dry trailers of my climbing rose—
> Make deep, O Wind, my rest! "

or more profound than:

> " It was not you I loved, it was not you!
> It was your beauty was the flickering fire
> That, on the wall I watched so eagerly, threw
> A gibing shadow of my own desire."

In neither quotation is Mr. Shanks obscure, though his demand in the first case follows somewhat inconsequently so loud a racket, but in neither case is the significance at all increased by the fact of its being in verse. He is not, however, always so explicit. When, in a sonnet, he writes of two hearts burning one into the other:

> " As do the cold, unmoving elements
> When to their joy the chemist's will consents
> " And from that flame some residue endures "

one is at a loss to understand the cause of the element's joy—unless it be in a chemico-mystical coitus—nor is it clear whether " *that* flame " refers to

the chemist's will or an assumed bunsen-burner. Such laxity of expression is to be condemned, not only for its own sake, but also because the idea that poetic effects are obtained by the conjunction of high-sounding words and vagueness of meaning is far too current.

HILL FRAGMENTS. By MADELINE MASON-MANHEIM. Palmer. 6s.

There is the clearest evidence in this volume, to which Mr. Arthur Symons contributes a preface, that the state of mind which is the aim of mysticism is fatal equally to the production and the appreciation of poetry. A transcendent aim precludes the possibility of reference to other experience, and the joys of Nirvana, to which any detachment from the object of contemplation is a hindrance, are incommunicable in proportion to their genuineness. But the pre-condition of art is just such experience as is worthless to the consistent mystic; and art's first principle is communication. True "mystical" poets, such as Vaughan and Traherne, describe their ecstasy in terms of life, of differentiation, indicating the ineffable unity by a poetic definition of the parts. Miss Mason-Manheim's verses come out of a general emotion in which words are used superstitiously as an instrument of revelation, as a quality rather than an accessory of vision. And Mr. Symons sanctions the muddle when he states his belief that

> "Music, in itself, is not a representation of the world, but an immediate voice of the world . . . the ecstasy of music can be maintained indefinitely and at its highest pitch, while the ecstasy of verse is shortened by what is definite in words."

It is small wonder that, with such a theory for encouragement, Miss Mason-Manheim's free-verse should be so confidently banal and fluid, and that her critic should so blindly misjudge its quality. "Her preference for the homeliest words, and for the rhythms in which the art—as I have said—consists in a seeming disregard of art, is in her favour; for with those unadorned words that come to our lips when we speak to one another, she obtains effects . . . of abstract passion and depth of thought, of unrestrained emotion, of a sense of mystery, of tragic ecstasy," etc., etc.

Under this dispensation the language of poetry is progressively meaningless, and the function of the critic is to use it as a springboard for a plunge into ineffable feeling. Such adventures rapidly become auto-generative, and then there is no need for the springboard at all.

ON LIFE AND LETTERS (3rd and 4th series). By ANATOLE FRANCE. The Bodley Head. 2s. 6d. each.

These volumes complete "La Vie Litteraire," his literary criticism, in the Bodley Head's excellent half-crown series of translations from Anatole France. M. France probably reads less well in English than any great French writer. It was making the best of a bad job to translate him, as Mr. Miall has done, as literally as possible, and expect that the reader would know enough French to sense the original. To read him again in our hard language is to become almost painfully aware of how little of a critic he was, being always so supremely himself. All poets, most novelists (all, indeed, except the school of M. Zola), and the greater number of even the merely literary men of whom he treats, become dissolved in the great bland oil which he sheds upon them. But then it is the most wonderfully refined oil in the world.

LETTERS FROM ENGLAND. By KAREL CHAPEK. Geoffrey Bles. 7s. 6d.

The beautiful irony of "The Insect Play" and the menacing, though intermittent, strength of "R.U.R." are not present in this book. Mr. Chapek is now just extremely observant and gently humorous, with every now and then a burst of poetry, unmistakable even in its second-hand prose guise. He sometimes pauses before our greensward and such traditions to wish that he were even a Czechish poet, and yet he can say of our trees

that "suddenly there is a sort of mumbling within them, they make a grotesque remark, a fork of pixie-like humour flies out of them, and once more they have the solemn appearance of old leather armchairs." He loves our policemen, hates our Sunday, and obviously tends to worship our Shaw. He is awed in our University towns, delighted in our countryside, and, at Wembley, frightened of our machines. All these emotions are described in a quaint, bright English which betrays the verbal genius of the original Czech, and reflects great credit upon his translator, Mr. Paul Selver. Mr. Chapek's drawings, crude as they are, admirably assist his air of what one would, perhaps, in the end, call "child-like enquiry" if one had not heard of his plays and did not know that he is deeply read in the pragmatic philosophers.

LONDON LIFE IN THE 14TH CENTURY. By CHARLES PENDRILL. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

An industrious and very readable book, particularly useful for reference on matters of trade in the century which saw the birth of trade unionism. The chapters on the street life and topography of London, its pageants, processions and civic organisation, are supplemented by descriptions of the activities of the bravos, "men of straw" (professional perjurers recognisable by wisps of straw in their shoes), swindlers, cut-throats, bogus pilgrims and sorcerers who, by keeping life dangerous, helped to preserve those qualities of individual initiative which are the sole sanction of a group movement. There is an amusing story of the lady who saved the burghers of Calais. In 1329 Edward III, preparing for a great jousting in Chepe, ordered a noble archway in the form of a tower to be erected across the street, so that the queen and her ladies might view the passage of arms. "Unfortunately, when they ascended the archway it collapsed in the middle, letting them down in most undignified fashion on the knights below, several of whom were injured, though none seriously. The carpenters who built it were on the point of becoming victims of the king's wrath when the gentle Queen Philippa, with her usual magnanimity, interfered and saved them from punishment. To avoid such accidents for the future, the King built beside Bow Church a great house of stone from which to view the tournaments." Mr. Pendrill's use of anecdote is discreet; it illuminates the actual narrative, from which it contrives a relief for the reader's attention.

THE BEST POEMS OF 1924. Small, Maynard & Co. $2.00.

Unless one were thoroughly conversant with the English and American magazines of the day it would be impossible to say how satisfactorily Mr. Strong has carried out his task. The number of poets represented, however, would suggest that he has been catholic in his choice, with a bias, acknowledged in the preface, towards Irish writers. An anthologist of contemporary work—Best Plays, Best Short Stories, Best Films or Best Poems—is in a difficult position. His work, if it is to be representative, must, in the present state of literature, necessarily lack unity, and Mr. Strong's undoubtedly does that. Again, if such an anthology is to serve any valuable purpose, it would seem necessary to give more than a single poem, whenever possible, of any poet, or perhaps, to exclude the poetry of those writers whose work is published periodically in books. The beauty of the individual poem is, of course, justification for its inclusion, but at present it is often necessary to read a poet at some length, until acquaintance with his mode of expression enables one to understand him. Too often this anthology only stirs an intuition as to the beauty of a particular poem. Knowing Mr. Hardy we can fully appreciate his poem "The Missed Train," while a very slight acquaintance with Mr. Kreymborg leaves us uncertain as to the significance of the interesting poem "And She Said and I Said."

The poems which, at a first reading, stand out from the others are, in addition to the two mentioned, those by Miss Cunard, Mr. Freeman, "King's

Ransom," by Miss Wylie, " Emily Hardcastle, Spinster," by Mr. Ransom and the first of Mr. Frost's.

THE COMPLETE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON. Martin Secker. 21s.

Emily Dickinson died at Amherst, New England, in 1886. Her life was extremely secluded and she had no pretensions to publicity. It is only since her death that, except for one or two poems, her work has been printed at all. She was undoubtedly a personality of unusual force and integrity, and her verse reflects these qualities. It will be discussed at length next month.

MILTON : MAN AND THINKER. By DENIS SAURAT. Cape, 15s.

This book is devoted to a lucid exposition of Milton's ideas and of their influence on the structure of his poems. It will be reviewed at length shortly, but in the meantime we may say that the view of Milton therein represented is one which the modern mind will find much more congenial than the one generally current. It should assist that revival of the poet's prestige which is rendered necessary by the diminishing effect of the usual pietistic criticism.

MYTHOLOGY. By JANE ELLEN HARRISON. Harrap. 5s.

This little book is an addition to the series called Our Debt to Greece and Rome. Miss Harrison does not attempt to calculate very fully the actual debt, but her book is a contribution to the study of the origin of gods and goddesses. Her idea is that a people makes its gods in the image of what it desires. This theory is worked out most fully, and brilliantly, in the case of Poseidon. Miss Harrison's writings are always fertile in suggestion : " It was the supreme genius of the Greeks as contrasted with the Romans that they were image-makers, *iconists*." The contrast might be extended to the whole of modern Europe, unfortunately. Our gods, or our idols, have no concrete forms, so that the imagery of our arts is predominately derivative. Archæology is the basis of Miss Harrison's arguments, which are always illuminating, if on the whole too consistently genteel completely to account for the tremendous vitality of a world of myth. The assistance of psychology has to be invoked to reveal the origin and meaning of many of the attributes of divinity, which have their root in deep-lying and not always reputable fastnesses of human desire.